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The Saturday Review of Literature

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

VOLUME VIII | NEW YORK, SATURDAY, MAY 14, 1932 | NUMBER 43

THE EDGEWORTH FAMILY ABOUT 1789. FROM A PASTEL BY ADAM BUCK.

Hands Up

WHAT has happened to the brash, self-confident American, who used to snap his fingers at the world? A few years ago he was in every club car reading *The Saturday Evening Post*, on every ocean steamer telling big stories in the smoking rooms, and a hero in most of the novels and short stories about America. Booth Tarkington did him beautifully in "The Plutocrat," crude, noisy, afraid of nothing but the wife, self-assured, with a reserve of power that came from a deep self-confidence. You remember that Tarkington, at the end of the story, compared him to those *nouveau riche* Romans of the powerful, grasping age of Rome, who changed the map of the world.

He was a caricature naturally, in life even more than in fiction. He was so full of race he made himself a type which was much easier to describe than to understand. He was, indeed, the loud speaker of a continent and seemed much more representative than he was. But not in his self-confidence. That had roots.

And now where is he? Out of a job, or taking more collateral to the bank, or sitting long at a hotel lunch, shaking his head over the rottenness of politics, or over the capitalist system, which used to be something that Socialists talked about, and now is his business and isn't working. The greatest optimist the world ever knew has become a pessimist over night.

And his constituents, the white-collar classes of America, of which he was the eccentric representative, have likewise lost confidence. How deep their uncertainty goes it is hard to say, probably not very deep yet; but their habit of uneasy speculation is growing. It is dismaying to hear so much questioning of our institutions among the middle-aged, so much cynical denial of anything good to come out of them, among the young. Dismaying and discouraging, because confidence has leaked out and nothing has taken its place. There is none of the happy crusading of the muck-rake days, or the confident idealism of the Wilson period, or the pugnacity of Mencken and the debunkers. This current unrest plays from weakness, not strength. There is no grip in it upon what is coming next.

Who does know what is coming next, but why grunt and whisper, and hold up shocked hands like a parcel of old ladies at a tea party, about a future which is still within reasonable control! Democracy has been a failure at least every decade since we began the experiment. The American nation was said to be degenerate, both politically and socially, before it won the right to be called a nation. Lawlessness, the alien, speculation, and overproduction have threatened our ruin at not infrequent periods ever since the eighteenth century. And of course American business and professional men sat shaking their heads over the end of republican institutions in 1800, in 1840, in 1857, and in 1873, very much as today.

And yet there has never been a more striking decline than from the high point of cockiness in the early 'twenties. A single phrase which once was prophetic, then boastful, and now ironic, measures in its emphasis the change in faith. Say "This is a great country" to your friends, and ask them to repeat it.

Only a part of this moral weakening (for no milder name can describe it) can be assigned to the results of hard times as such. There is trouble in the receiver as well as in the wires to conditions outside. The brash American type is suffering from spiritual indigestion. He has been fed too long on advertising, on promotion, on speculation. He has thought too long and too exclusively (like Tarkington's Romans) upon vast profit-making schemes, and he has had no Greek tutors to warn him against excess. He has stuffed himself with projects, had his way like a spoiled child, and now, having lost his meal ticket, thinks the world at an end. He should note the strangely mild behavior of those who are really hungry, and consider whether their sporadic attacks upon the government are not less dangerous than his panic. For panic this readiness to question everything most certainly is. We hold up our hands whenever our social system, the economic system in which we were bred, our moral and esthetic ideas, are attacked by anyone anywhere, even as Congress holds up its hands if a veteran crosses Pennsylvania Avenue. There is a time for everything, a time for criticizing error and injustice in our institutions, and a time for defending what is solid, reasonable, familiar, and adaptable in them. Hands up to fate is not a dignified position for the so-called red-blooded American.

A Neglected Author*

By PADRAIC COLUM

WHAT became of the writer of "Castle Rackrent"? Amongst the best of the few short novels in English, it is at the beginning of Anglo-Irish novels, and amongst them it remains unsurpassed. It was written by a young woman, Maria Edgeworth, and as far as idiom, character, compass, form are concerned, it had no successor.

It is true that in her long career as author Maria Edgeworth produced a variety of other books—moral tales, volumes of instruction, novels. But amongst her novels, even amongst her Irish novels, "The Absentee," "Ormond," and "Ennui," there are no successors to "Castle Rackrent," no book in which singleness of idea is illustrated with such richness. What came in the way of this early book having a successor? Was it because Maria came under the influence—or rather, came into the confluence—of a father who, if ever there was one, was a practical idealist, and who insisted that the written word should advance the cause of practical idealism? Or was it that Maria was a one-book writer as Beckford, whose "Vathek" is about the same length as "Castle Rackrent," was a one-book writer, that she had only a temporary existence on that stratum of her being, and that for the rest of her life she existed on quite another, the stratum that was close to that of her father's practical idealism?

That influence amounted to a confluence—there was collaboration between Maria and her father in the production of the books that followed "Castle Rackrent." Such active interest on the part of her greatly admired parent must have been a great stimulus to Maria, and must have made the production of books a happy and well-rewarded labor. "Ormond" came out while Mr. Edgeworth was very ill. "He had had a terrible night," Maria informs her cousin. She put into his hands the hundred and sixty printed pages of "Ormond."

> "Call Sneyd directly" [he said] and swallowed some stirabout, and said he felt renovated. Sneyd was seated at the foot of the bed. "Now, Maria, dip anywhere, read on." I began, "King Corny recovered." Then said he, "I must tell Sneyd the story up to this." And most eloquently, most beautifully did he tell the story! No mortal could have suggested that he was an invalid, if they had only heard him speak.

Then she tells of the parts of "Ormond" that were written by her father—she mentions three important episodes in the book, one of which was written and the other two dictated by him. "My father corrected the whole of two related episodes by having it read to him many times; often working at it in his bed for hours together, once at the end, for six hours between the intervals of sickness and exquisite pain."

There is no trace of the author of "Castle Rackrent" in the delightful and informing book that has been made of her "chosen letters." These cover all except the youthful portion of her life, beginning in 1791 and ending in 1849—nearly sixty years. They are written from Ireland, England, Scotland, France; nearly every one of them has some revealing glimpse of personality or of the times. "A fool, Mr. Edgeworth, you know, is a man who never tried an experiment in his life." It is Erasmus Darwin who says it, and we see the age of invention approaching, and with it the interest in nature's experiments that was to lead to the theory of Natural Selection. Slavery is already being denounced. "Twenty-five thousand people in England have absolutely left off eating West India sugar, from the hope that when there is no longer any demand for sugar the slaves will not be so cruelly treated. Children in several schools have given up sweet things, which is surely very benevolent." But Maria has not lost her sense of humor in the face of all this practical idealism. "My father avers he ate excellent custards sweetened with honey. Will it not be rather hard on the poor bees in the end?" Everyone at the time was reading Mrs. Radcliffe, and Maria notes that the horrific parts of her stories were well worked up. "But it is very difficult to keep Horror breathless with his mouth wide open through three volumes." The sense of humor that shows itself in such remarks makes these "Chosen Letters" delightful. She tells of a highbrow volume she has been reading—"An Essay towards a Universal Philosophical Language." One of the prints illustrating it is "a long sheet of men with their throats cut, so as to show the windpipe whilst working out the different letters of the alphabet."

Maria, taking her two half-sisters along, made two visits to France—the first was at the beginning of Bonaparte's ascendency and the second was after the Restoration. "We are now, my dear aunt Mary, in a magnificent hotel in the fine square, formerly Place Louis Quinze, afterwards Place de la Revolution, and now Place de la Concorde. Here the guillotine was at

* Maria Edgeworth: Chosen Letters, with an introduction by F. V. Barry. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1932. $3.

This Week

"YEARS OF TUMULT."
Reviewed by GEOFFREY PARSONS.

"GEORGE WASHINGTON, SOUL OF THE REVOLUTION."
Reviewed by JOHN CORBIN.

"FOOD AND DRINK."
Reviewed by LEE WILSON DODD.

"OF THEE I SING" and other plays.
Reviewed by THOMAS H. DICKINSON.

"SCANDALOUS PRINCESS."
Reviewed by BEN RAY REDMAN.

"SMALL TOWN STUFF."
Reviewed by WHITING WILLIAMS.

"THE MAHDI OF ALLAH."
Reviewed by CHARLES ROLAND.

"THE MASTER OF THE HOUSE."
Reviewed by ERNEST SUTHERLAND BATES.

"THREE GO BACK."
Reviewed by CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

GLEANINGS FROM ARNOLD BENNETT'S JOURNAL.

Next Week, or Later

THE COLLECTED POEMS OF ELINOR WYLIE.
Reviewed by LOUIS UNTERMEYER.

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work night and day; and here died Louis Seize, and Marie Antoinette, and Madame Roland." She is writing in 1802. Oddly enough she makes no mention of the fact that Louis Seize was attended by an Irish priest who was of her family—the Abbé Edgeworth. One wonders why Maria makes so little of this historical connection. Did her Protestantism make her chary of dwelling on her relationship to an Abbé? Hardly; she has a declared admiration for an Abbé whom she meets in Paris—the Abbé Morellet—("O, my dear aunt Mary, how you would love that man, and we need not be afraid of loving him, for he is near eighty"). She mentions being in the carriage that Madame Elizabeth was taken in, and notes that the Abbé Edgeworth was in it. But that is all she says on that topic. The Restoration comes and Louis the Eighteenth writes a Latin verse on the Abbé. An Irish Catholic gentleman shows the verse to the family in Ireland: Maria remarks that the king's Latinity is good but gives nothing of the text. This indifference to her notable relative is quite unaccountable. The connection surely must have meant something to her when she went into the Faubourgs —it must have helped to open duchesses' doors to Maria and her half-sisters. One wonders if in the case of the Edgeworth estate a younger branch of the family did not get possession through an elder branch remaining Catholic.

Her characterizations of the notabilities whom she meets are exceedingly good, and, where her sympathies are engaged, memorable. She met Madame d'Ouditot, Rousseau's Julie, and, beginning by thinking her unprepossessing, she ends by leaving us a pleasing picture of that survival from another epoch—"A thin woman in a little black bonnet: she appears to me shockingly ugly, she squints so much that it is impossible to tell which way she is looking." But Maria soon realizes,

> She has had great misfortunes, but she has still retained the power of making herself and her friends happy. Even during the horrors of the revolution, if she met with a flower, a butterfly, an agreeable smell, a pretty color, she would turn her attention to these, and for a moment suspend her sense of misery, not from frivolity, but from real philosophy.

Then La Harpe, "in a dirty reddish night-gown, and a very dirty night-cap bound round a forehead with a superlatively dirty chocolate-colored ribbon," being visited by Madame Recamier, "robed in white satin trimmed with white fur," who seats herself on the elbow of his armchair and beseeches him to repeat his verses. And the visit to another survival, Madame de Genlis, the author of the admired "Rosière de Salancy," the governess of the Duke of Orleans's children and the mother of his daughter, the romantic Pamela, Lady Fitzgerald. This is an unforgettable sketch.

> To me there was nothing of the engaging, captivating manner which I had been taught to expect by many even of her enemies; she seemed to me to be alive only to literary quarrels and jealousies, the muscles of her face as she spoke, or as my father spoke to her, quickly and too easily expressed hatred and anger whenever any not of her own party were mentioned.

When Mr. Edgeworth spoke to her of the wife of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, the executed Irish leader, "explaining how he had defended her in the Irish House of Commons, instead of being pleased or touched, her mind instantly diverged into an elaborate and artificial exculpation of Lady Edward and herself, proving, or attempting to prove, that she never knew any of her husband's plans." Maria adds that "Madame de Genlis seems to have been so used to being attacked, that she has defenses and apologies ready prepared and suited to all possible occasions." When Maria told her that she had not read Madame de Staël's "Amélie," she was kissed three times on the forehead.

But best of all her sketches is the one of that unnoted lady, the Duchess of Wellington. To other folk the Duchess was merely the consort of the Iron Duke, but to the Edgeworths she was the sister and daughter of their Irish neighbor, Lord Longford—she was Kitty Pakenham. And all Maria's affection for good friends and companions is in the picture of the duchess's end:

> In the midst, on a high, narrow, mattressed sofa like Lucy's, all white and paler than marble, lay, as if laid out a corpse, the Duchess of Wellington. Always little and delicate-looking, she now looked a miniature figure of herself in waxwork. As I entered I heard her voice before I saw her, before I could distinguish her features among the borders of her cap; only saw the place where her head lay on the huge raised pillow; the head moved, the head only, and the sweet voice of Kitty Pakenham exclaimed. . . . And a little delicate, death-like hand stretched itself out to me before I could reach the couch. . . . Opposite her couch hung the gold shield in imitation of the shield of Achilles with all the Duke's victories embossed on the margin. . . . While I looked at these the Duchess, raising herself up, exclaimed with weak-voiced, strong-souled enthusiasm: "All tributes to merit! there's the value, no corruption ever suspected even. Even of the Duke of Marlborough that could not be said so truly."

The letters give many pictures of the Ireland of her time. It was a misfortune that that Ireland could make no public use of the enormous talent, inventiveness, enterprise possessed by that astonishing man Richard Lovell Edgeworth. How magnficently he could have functioned as a Minister of Education or a Minister of Commerce and Industry? The school which he established on his estate should have been a valuable foundation for agricultural and technical education, but it was before its time, and it came to an early end. Maria lived through two desperate periods of Irish history. As a young woman she felt the terror of the peasant insurrection of 1798; as an old woman she tried to give assistance in the famine of 1847. Her father, although a landowner, was so friendly with the peasants of his county and to the proscribed Catholics that the ultra-royalist yeomanry suspected him of signalling to the French allies of the insurrectionists, and were ready to burn down his mansion. Maria heard the alarm of the advance of the pikemen on the neighboring towns, and she saw the bodies of peasants hanging by the roadside. She, with her father and mother, went to the field where the French who had come to the aid of the insurrectionists met their defeat.

> On the right hand side of this stream about sixty bell-tents were pitched, the arms all ranged on the grass; before the tents, poles with little streamers flying here and there; groups of men leading their horses to water, others filling kettles and black pots, some cooking under the hedges; the various uniforms looked pretty; Highlanders gathering blackberries.

Her horse, she observes, did not like the sights of the camp as well as she did. There is no realization in her note that the scene on which she looked would have an interest for generations of Irish people. The existing order which Maria might criticize and even be satirical about had been disturbed temporarily by an uprising and by a slight foreign intervention—that was all, and in a few months a theatre had been built in the house, and a comedy written by Maria and her father was being produced.

Miss Edgeworth's Irish stories, according to the handsome testimony that he rendered her, influenced Scott's; they influenced Turgeniev's also; in fact, these stories were the beginning of that rendering of local life of which Turgeniev and Thomas Hardy were the masters. These Irish novels are the only works of hers that live now; her tales of fashionable life were put into the background by those of her younger contemporary, Jane Austen. The Irish stories are "Castle Rackrent," "The Absentee," "Ormond," and "Ennui," and of these four, "Castle Rackrent" is a masterpiece; the others, although there are good episodes in them, have no passion, no spontaneity; the people, even the peasants who figure in them, are a little too elegant. Miss Edgeworth said of an Irish novel published during her middle age, Gerald Griffin's "Collegians," "There is much genius and strong drawing of human nature, but not elegant: terrible pictures of the passions, and horrible, breathless interest, especially in the third volume, which never flags till the last huddled twenty pages." She was very modest about her own achievements and quite critical:

> I had often a suspicion that my manner was too Dutch, too minute. . . . How I wish I could furnish, as Scott has, some of those pictorial tales colored to the life; but I fear I have not that power, therefore it is perhaps that I strive to console myself that there is much, though not such glorious, use in my own lesser manner and department.

How delightful a person she must have been to know, with her strong affections, her sincerity, her humor! Byron saw her as a "nice, little, unassuming 'Jeanie Deans' looking body," but Scott knew her as "Whippity Stourie, the fairy so much renowned in Scotch nurseries." She had two sides to her, revealing one to Byron, whom she did not approve of, and the other to Scott, whom she idolized. She was, in fact, the ideal, the eternal aunt—domesticated, instructive, humorous, selfless, dedicated. In another sphere her capacity for enterprise and devotion would have made her the noted Reverend Mother of a convent. However, she could hardly have a place in a convent, for there was a masculine influence on Maria's life —the influence of that long-talking, loud-talking, inventive man, Richard Lovell Edgeworth, her father.

Tingling with Life

YEARS OF TUMULT. By JAMES H. POWERS. New York: W. W. Norton & Company. 1932. $3.

Reviewed by GEOFFREY PARSONS

THIS is an ably organized and finely balanced book. It puts an amazing amount of analysis and perspective into the thirteen tumultuous years that have engulfed Europe since the World War.

Mr. Powers expresses the hope that "some of the immense confusion created in the public mind by the pell-mell of 1931 may be dispersed by a plain narrative, sketching the major developments of the world drama since the beginning of the Treaty of Versailles." He has, indeed, followed a narrative method, but the result is far from what the word "plain" might lead one to expect. At the outset stands the task of selection and omission involved in compressing these dense years into 334 pages. An incredible amount of concrete fact is packed into the volume as the excellent, detailed index bears witness. But Mr. Powers has lopped and trimmed boldly, none the less; he had to, to make the volume possible. As for arrangement, Mr. Powers has so organized his facts as to give them something of the unity and sweep of a stage drama—in three acts and an epilogue. There is Hardyesque quality in plot as, recurrently, in phrase.

The first act is "The Treaty and the World Stage." It sets the mood of 1919 in a vivid picture of the individuals who thronged to Paris to write the end of the war in a treaty accurately described as "loaded with the dynamite of a destructive past and the dynamite of a constructive future." Right here it may be interjected that the author belongs with the current school of thought commonly labelled "liberal," which stresses the new dynamite manufactured at Versailles at the expense of the old. Mr. Powers frankly describes the treaty as "the villain in the piece." He is too good a historian not to be familiar with the roots of Europe's disputes and discontents. He portrays them well. But he unmistakably subscribes to the central tenet of the liberal creed, that society by taking enough thought, can achieve a new rate of progress. He thus sees the drama since Versailles as proceeding from a conflict between "political negatives" and "human affirmatives." As a conventional part of the same faith, he stresses the great age of the men who wrote the treaty. The implication is plainly that, had younger and more liberal minds controlled, the thousand years that went to the making of Europe might have been unscrambled—not exactly at the stroke of a pen, but at least surely and hopefully.

This outlook runs throughout the book with its inevitable consequences. Mr. Powers is warmly sympathetic alike toward the Russian experiment and the Indian revolt. As between Germany the victim and France the victor, there is small question where his heart is despite a conscientious effort to be scrupulously fair, even toward that arch-fiend of liberal theogony, M. Poincaré. As for American isolation, after a penetrating and imaginative review of this country's relations to the outside world—it runs from page 315 to page 318 and is in itself worth the price of the volume—Mr. Powers lets his faith in internationalism lead him into picturing this country as accepting isolation as "a polite fiction." Considering that two of the most ardent advocates of the League of Nations in America, Governor Roosevelt and Mr. Newton Baker, felt obliged to declare their apostacy in order to qualify for the Presidency, and that the Hoover Administration, after briefly seating a representative at a League session, hurriedly withdrew and kept General Dawes safely apart in a Paris hotel, we think Mr. Powers here gets ahead of his facts. American isolation seems much more like "an impolite reality" at the present moment, whatever it may become in the future.

But this bias of Mr. Powers detracts not the least from the value of his book. The completely impartial book remains yet to be written; and when it is written it will not be worth reading. The important points are that "Years of Tumult" possesses, first, a scholarly accuracy in its facts and a singularly imaginative and clarifying arrangement of them. Whether one agrees or disagrees with his basic theories, one can take only profit from the vivid simplification of events and the clarification in their ordering.

At the end of Book One comes a major analysis of world policy. Mr. Powers sees "three belts of policy" dividing the nations, communism ruling Russia, Social Democracy prevailing in Europe, and the United States holding fast to a democratic individualism. There follows in Book Two a pageant of the nations, beginning with Soviet Russia and ending with "The Balkans"—Europe's Witch Cauldron." By thus narrating the events touching each nation in turn, the author gives a singular clarity to the picture, even if at the cost of some repetition. The final chapter, "The Struggle with Disunion," is necessarily unsatisfactory and incomplete from a dramatic point of view. For it necessarily breaks off in the middle. The sky was murky with dilemmas and enigmas when Mr. Powers laid down his pen last January. If anything, the clouds have darkened since. For those who insist upon an escape, a solution, a remedy, the artifact of human wisdom, there can seldom have been a more desperate moment. Fortunately Mr. Powers has lived daily in the world of fact which envelops every journalist. He has not permitted a disappointed liberalism to darken his narrative. He writes like any realist, conscious alike of the enormous tragedy of human existence and of its marvellous adventure. That is perhaps the central reason why his volume is so tingling with life and so well worth the reading.

Geoffrey Parsons is the chief editorial writer of the New York Herald-Tribune.

"Everything comes to those who wait," says a Paris correspondent of the London *Observer* apropos of the French Academy's Dictionary, "but perhaps some of the faithful admirers of the French Academy, who have waited close upon three hundred years for that eminent body to carry out their part of the task entrusted to it by Louis XIII and Richelieu, are a little tired, patient and elderly as some of them are well known to be. However, the amazing thing about the grammar, now that it has appeared, is that it is without any question a best seller. The first edition of fifty thousand copies was snapped up within a few days of its appearance, and will doubtless now acquire a collector's value—especially as it included a grammatical mistake or printer's error ("que nous suffisissions" for "que nous suffisions") which escaped the vigilance of all the committees and individuals who had meticulously criticised and amended the proofs, but was fortunately discovered in time to be corrected by a special slip."

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First in War

GEORGE WASHINGTON, SOUL OF THE REVOLUTION. By NORWOOD YOUNG. New York: Robert M. McBride & Co. 1932. $3.50.

Reviewed by JOHN CORBIN

TIME was when it appeared that the best accounts of American liberalism, and of what it has meant to the world were destined to be written by Englishmen. Compared with the pompous turgidities of Bancroft, the gossiping trivialities of McMaster, and the earth-bound pedestrianism of Channing, Lecky's account of our Revolution, Frederick Scott Oliver's appraisal of Alexander Hamilton, and Lord Charnwood's biography of Lincoln were flights of genius. It now appears that such flights are possible only to the English liberal. Mr. Norwood Young declares, truly enough, that his "George Washington, Soul of the Revolution" is the "first general biography" of the disruptor of the British Empire to be "written by an Englishman"; but he would have spoken as truly, and much more to the purpose, if he had declared that it is written by an English tory. True, he has little charity for the ineptitudes of George III and Lord North, but the sour grapes of 1776 still set his teeth on edge.

Bowing to the inevitable, Mr. Young declares that Washington was "an outstanding personality, upright and majestic," and "an ardent patriot of perfect integrity," and in the main he depicts him as such; but the gall of bitterness drips from his pen as if unawares. Can such a "personality" lie outright, lie glibly and persistently? It appears that he can. The articles of capitulation which the young soldier signed at Great Meadows in 1754 referred (in French) to his killing of Jumonville as an "assassination." Washington declared, in a letter to Governor Dinwiddie, that the interpreter "wilfully or ignorantly deceived" him in regard to the word, glossing it as *death*, and that he would continue so to aver "to my dying moment." But Mr. Young declares, on merely general grounds and without adducing a jot of evidence, that the assertion "cannot be accepted." So that's that! After Braddock's defeat, Washington wrote to Dinwiddie: "I had four Bullets thro' my Coat and two horses Shot under me." Mr. Young cites the statement of Martha's grandson, G. W. P. Custis, that he and many others had seen and handled the hat Washington wore, which had been "pierced by two balls." Mr. Young astutely remarks that in piercing a garment a ball not only goes in but comes out again, and concludes: "Probably there was one ball through the hat, making two holes, and one through the coat, making two more."

A more liberal biographer might plead that Washington was not capable of achieving this abstruse calculation, having by his own confession, which Mr. Young quotes on a bastard title-page, "inherited inferior endowments from nature." But Mr. Young, sternly logical, insists that Washington lied. For it was his boastful "Story" as to those bullets that made him "the hero of the Monongahela" and eventually Commander-in-Chief in the Revolution—which, except for his perfect and majestic integrity, could scarcely have disrupted the British Empire. In the face of all this youthful tarrididdling, however, Mr. Young finds himself strongly inclined to accept the modern evidence, adduced by Mr. R. T. H. Halsey from a German beer-mug, that Parson Weems's anecdote of the little hatchet is veracious and authentic. Thus between hatchet and cherry-tree on the one hand, and higher mathematics as to four bullets on the other, the world seems destined to remain in doubt as to the sad disruption of the British Empire.

For not a few of Mr. Young's acidities American biographers are primarily responsible. The following sentence reads like a transcript from the debunking Woodward, or from the first volume of Hughes. "One after another the young ladies to whom he had presented himself had turned their backs on him." Washington, it might appear, was ambitious to become not only the father but the husband of his country. In point of fact, only one young lady is known to have had the distinction of turning her back, Miss Betsey Fauntleroy; and the little evidence we have with regard to the episode suggests that what he intended was merely a *mariage de convenance*, then the usual procedure, which had been rendered unusually desirable by the fact that he had lately inherited Mount Vernon and was sorely in need of a housekeeper. Such certainly was the case later when he made overtures to Martha Custis. Also we read: "Just after his engagement to Mrs. Custis, Washington was writing love letters to another man's wife." One would scarcely imagine, what a very considerable body of evidence makes manifest, that the conduct of both Washington and Sally Fairfax was of the utmost propriety, magnanimity, and tragic beauty, as was also the conduct of George Fairfax, who was Washington's neighbor and admiring friend always.

But to return to the sad disruption of the British Empire. It was especially sad, we find, because "the separation of the American colonies was neither inevitable nor salutary." And how? Our tories had the right idea, and Washington came to agree with them. To his mature view, the "theory of royalty" was "relatively innocuous." The disruptor of the Empire perceived, on the morrow of the Revolution, that "a monarchy might be necessary," and he "thought it might be advisable" to establish one—"by which he meant a dictatorship." These statements are based on a series of garbled quotations from letters written during that blackest of nights which preceded the dawn of the Constitution. A single example will suffice. "Without means of coercion in the sovereign," Washington wrote, the "boasted virtue of America" was more than likely to "exhibit the last melancholy proof that mankind are not competent to their own government." The key word here is assuredly *melancholy*. At Newburgh, the officers of his victorious army, infuriated by the impotence and the slights of the Continental Congress, were bent on making him military dictator and offered him a crown. The story of his handling and ultimate suppression of the plot is perhaps the noblest and most moving in our history. To any unjaundiced reader of the letters which Mr. Young cites, it is evident that, as throughout his life, he was inspired by an austere and uncompromising republicanism, modeled on that of the Roman Cato. At one time his despair of orderly self-government reached such depths that, hearing of the death of General Greene, he declared it a felicity to be thus spared the spectacle of the ruin of the republican endeavor which he regarded as more than probable. Washington preferred death to either chaos or a king. Yet even in those black hours he never ceased to labor with all his might in behalf of republican union and strength—the only "sovereign" which he held to be "salutary."

All this is of importance, not as showing that Mr. Young is wrong-headed, but as showing that he is wrong-headed about an idea that is essentially and importantly right. It is what he calls, with reference to the *pax Romana*, "a universal *pax Anglo-Americana*." He quotes Van Tyne as saying: "The loyalists [American tories] imagined a world empire, paramount over all, bringing peace and freedom over all the globe"; and that marks the full extent of Mr. Young's own imaginings. Few things could be more contrary to the spirit of Washington and of the nation he founded. It is true that he believed as little in equalitarian democracy as in monarchy or any form of dictatorship. The goal of his aspiration was that of John Adams and of the entire Constitutional Convention with the single exception of Franklin—a republic firmly balanced between pure democracy and autocracy, yet with all necessary means of "coercion" in the "sovereign," which was the state. That granted, he was for peace no less ardently than the warmest advocate of a league of nations. That he would not countenance an autocratic *pax Anglo-Americana* is as certain as that he led the Revolution against England.

Of the shortcomings of the League of Nations the chief one is doubtless the persistent intrusion of party politics as practised in the home states. What the men at Geneva perceive to be necessary is one thing, and what they feel able to accomplish without endangering the various parliamentary majorities which they individually represent, is quite another. If we were a member of the League, our representatives could agree to nothing that was not proof against skitings of blather from a mere third of our democratically elected Senate. It is not the Constitution of the League that renders it futile but the constitutions of modern states. The republican ideal of Washington and of the Constitution, which was somehow submerged during the nineteenth century, was that the character and ability of the nation, not political parties, should be in control of its destinies—"the wise and good" as he and John Adams put it. He was against mass democracy, as he was against all other dictatorships, because it places the blind will of the people above its experienced wisdom; and he was against parties and all spirit of faction as placing personal political motives above clear-seeing and impartial patriotism.

This is not the place to labor the question, but Mr. Young's eighteenth-century toryism will not have challenged attention in vain if it causes us to stop and consider. Is not a world of republics such as Washington dreamed the only possible basis for enduring peace a world in which all nations shall have the maximum of liberty compatible with the necessary "coercion," a moral and spiritual brotherhood made everywhere real and operative by the dominance of the wise and good?

John Corbin is the author, among other books, of a biography of the First President entitled "The Unknown Washington."

WOODCUT OF MT. VERNON, BY HENRY R. DIAMOND

A Choice Collation

FOOD AND DRINK. By LOUIS UNTERMEYER. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1932. $2.50.

Reviewed by LEE WILSON DODD

THIS latest gathering of Louis Untermeyer's own verse is a small, choice collation for connoisseurs. Nothing too hearty is offered; the *cuisine* is light, delicate, *recherché*. All the elements of the meal are thoughtfully selected, and they are served with a grace and elegance that is extremely flattering to his guests. Mr. Untermeyer makes discreet use of certain exotic flavorings, such as assonance; but with him this is merely that least suspicion of garlic which adds the one haunting accent to a well-combined and subtly-dressed salad. Nothing too much. There is a nice artistry, a nice restraint everywhere. The result is delightful.

Mr. Untermeyer is always in touch with the advance guard in his chosen art, though he is never an extremist. It is clear, however, that following the present commendable fashion he has been studying certain of the minor "metaphysical" poets of the seventeenth century. *Plus ça change. . . .* The metaphysical school of "wit," as it happens, is curiously well suited to the present rather desiccated age, and to Mr. Untermeyer's restricted but genuine talents. He is distinctly an intellectual poet, with a dexterous and refined technique.

I like particularly, in the present volume, the poem "Food and Drink," with its sharp, neat "realizations" ("The deep reserve of artichokes"), and the sonnet, "To an Asking Girl," who is unable to reconcile Truth and Beauty. It is better to quote than to describe:

Dear child, forget the labyrinth whose reaches
Tangle and twist through all-too-dexterous mind.
Words will not bring you what you hope to find;
There is no falser phrase than that which teaches.
There is more wisdom in these primitive beaches,
Schooled by uncertain water and resigned
To dust and dancing stars and all their kind
Whose chaos is more dangerous than Nietzsche's.

The seal secure within his crumbling wave
Knows all there is of truth. The windy gull,
Lifting herself on some invisible arc,
Dear child, is beauty. . . . Curious and brave,
You are the two: A challenge to the dull,
And the bright answer to the questioning dark.

The octave of this sonnet is not wholly satisfactory, but the sestet beautifully redeems it and is memorable; and there are other verses in this reticent volume which court remembrance.

A final word must be said of the pen and ink decorations by George Plank; they are fanciful, humorous, and charming.

Literary Loves

PASSION: SIX LITERARY MARRIAGES. By ROBERT NEUMANN. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1932. $2.

THIS is a curious book, a cross between short story and biography with a dash of drama. The German author has taken the high points of the love life of Shelley, Strindberg, Dostoievsky, Goethe, Byron, and Balzac. He wastes little time but plunges in either by dialogue or diary or straight description to the center of the romance with a satiric, not to say a sardonic, gleam in his eye, and conclusions both pathetic and ironical. The best is a striking scene in which Dostoievsky takes on a new secretary, the most dramatic the self-story of the half mad Strindberg, and the creditors' auction of Balzac's personal effects while he lies, supposedly dead, in the next room. Neumann is least happy with the English, and both Shelley and Byron are warped, especially Shelley; he is more at home with the German Christiane, Goethe's mistress and wife. The book has no profundity of insight, but it is very well done and very readable.

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The Angle of Incidence

REUNION IN VIENNA. By ROBERT E. SHERWOOD. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1932. $2.

OF THEE I SING. By GEORGE S. KAUFMAN, MORRIE RYSKIND, and IRA GERSHWIN. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1932.

THE DEVIL PASSES. By BENN W. LEVY. New York: Samuel French. 1932. $2.

SPRINGTIME FOR HENRY. By BENN W. LEVY. New York: Samuel French. 1932. $2.

TONIGHT WE IMPROVISE. By LUIGI PIRANDELLO. Translated from the Italian by SAMUEL PUTNAM. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1932. $2.50.

Reviewed by THOMAS H. DICKINSON

OF the five plays comprising today's repertory there can be no doubt which works take leading place by vitality of imagination and an achieved fusing of their elements. When it is said that the American plays win *facile princeps* in all respects of intellectual and artistic integrity, and yet show in their substance clear traces of an alien inspiration, we have something of a measure of the anomaly of art in our generation. For our artists are today busily engaged in violating the doctrines which yesterday bade us to view life steadily and view it whole. Nothing is now further from our minds than this presumptuous and terrifying undertaking. We no longer face the facts; we face the music.

A generation and a half ago the playwrights of the world went to school in the boulevards of Paris and learned the lessons of Gallic artifice. Ten years later they moved to the Free Theaters of Germany and exchanged the artifice of France for a Teutonic brand. When our "younger generation" was breaking its shell the intense preoccupations of Russia were in the ascendant, and as a selfish man with the toothache can convince a whole drawing rooom of the universality of toothache we all began to think and write Russian. Now that there seems to be general agreement that the world is in a sorry mess, and that there isn't much to do about it anyway, our playwrights are turning to the Danube, some to Vienna and others to Budapest, and are demonstrating that in the world of the imagination as in the world of statesmanship, when Austria-Hungary ceases to exist it is necessary to invent a new Austria-Hungary.

"Reunion in Vienna" is, of course, far more than another dramatization of a Viennese waltz. It is so much more that I have had moods while reading it (and it should be read as well as seen) of thinking that it is the wisest and ripest comedy ever written in America. I cannot at the moment think of another that moves with such a lively grace and still keeps an intelligent head on its shoulders. In this respect I find myself in humble disagreement with the Pulitzer Prize Committee though I yield to none in admiration of the play of their choice. Sherwood has so often been compared with Shaw that the association of their names is no longer flattery to either, and yet Shaw has done so many things with a provocative badness that it is a satisfaction to see the same things done with a graceful finality. "Reunion in Vienna" is as modern as the latest theory of the neuroses, and yet it is a modernism that is now mature enough to have languors and regrets and nostalgias.

While I am on the subject I must put in a word of remonstrance against the author's preface. In fact, it is the only funny thing in the book, the play itself being definitely not funny at all, but wisely witty and humorous. "So man is giving loud expression to his reluctance to confront the seemingly inevitable," writes the author in many more and much larger words than that. So indeed man is doing, and the loudness of his expression is adding to the general confusion. But there is nothing loud about "Reunion in Vienna." If it avoids confronting the seemingly inevitable it does so by leading us nearer to the veritably inevitable. Fortunately Lunt and Fontane were not called upon to act the Preface.

Perhaps the most surprising thing about "Of Thee I Sing" is that with all its vitality and freshness it represents one of the oldest forms in the entire practice of the theater. Nathan refers it back to W. S. Gilbert and Charles H. Hoyt. He might have gone back to John Brougham who, adapted an "Allegoric, Metaphoric Filtration of Sur-Passing Events" to lyric uses; he might even have gone back to Aristophanes. The beauty of this kind of thing is that it is old and ever new. It is as old as the first buffoon who ever thumbed his nose at pomposity and fakery. Kaufman and Ryskind reverse the process of Sherwood. The author of "Reunion in Vienna" avoids confronting the facts because they are too terrible to contemplate. The authors of "Of Thee I Sing" look the facts full in the face and find them ridiculous. The less criticism has to say about a lampoon the better. It either is or it isn't. "Of Thee I Sing" most definitely is!

Of Benn W. Levy it may be said that he is the kind of man, expert, suave, interested in ideas, who makes you think of the man who stands behind him rather than of himself. In these two plays of Levy's the Molnar touch is unmistakable. It is wielded by an Anglo-Saxon hand that sets itself resolutely to capable workmanship in a field in which genius is indispensable. The Molnar formula is almost perfectly employed. It consists of an arbitrary key that unlocks a secret garden, a garden that is given rather to haunting fragrances than to sturdy growths. Not to press resemblances too far, it is apparent that each of the Levy plays has a Hungarian prototype, "The Devil Passes" in "The Devil" (this indeed being the title of Levy's play in London) and "Springtime for Henry" in "The Good Fairy." Strangely enough, the authors seem to exchange national traits in their craftsmanship. The Hungarian craftsman muddles through to delightful concoctions of sentiment and wayward personality. The English sentimentalist creates an intricate structure of brittle glass, shedding light from many facets. In each case there is the arbitrary factor, the agreed-upon suspension of incredulity. But the plays move to different ends. With the Englishman the fantasy is everywhere fitted and dovetailed into a mundane structure that cannot for all his dexterity escape the pointing finger of tendency. With the Hungarian the initial violation of the verities is but the first step that lures us into a madcap world. Having learned how easy that step is we follow further and further, rewarded always by the delights of the excursion and sometimes by a glimpse of the author's impish smile. I don't know how it is with others, but with me the nicely articulated world of Levy's fantasy never comes real.

"Tonight We Improvise" must be treated not as drama but as argument. We may grant its tremendous power to intrigue the imagination without admitting it into first place in the theater. As drama it is at loose ends not because of the novelty of its structure but because of the author's too insistent preoccupation with structure. The struggle in Pirandello's plays is always one of philosophic virtuosity. It has no existence save in a world of terminologies and systems. A great play fights itself free from all such impedimenta. Pirandello is deeply interested in the paradox of the outer and inner life, the theme and the treatment, form and matter, the creator and the created. Granting that this paradox exists it is a paradox that reveals itself only to a mind in quest of the delights of choplogic. This is most decidedly not the dramatist's mind, a mind which is always seeking passionate identifications rather than technical differentiations. When the drama is quick and vital it is oblivious to the machinery by which it is effected. It is even oblivious to the machinery, as such, of life itself. Pirandello is obsessed with the machinery of both life and theater. It is an obsession that leads him to some interesting conceptions of the interchangeable qualities of the two domains. Incidentally it makes him the most trenchant interpreter of the *commedia dell 'arte* principle of dramatic production of modern times. But it is not to be ignored that Pirandello, who stands for the breaking up of the conventions of the drama, leaves upon his own work the marks of heavy-handedness and force. No one would ever claim that the six characters of his most famous play were real characters. Nor can it be claimed that the puppets with which he starts in "Tonight We Improvise" ever achieve personality even when they throw off the actor's mask and presume to direct their own destinies. The author begins with them as puppets in one dimension. He leaves them as puppets in another.

"Life and form, fixity and motion, the enduring and the transient, such is life and the world, life's problem and the world's problem, as Pirandello sees it," writes the translator. This is a sufficiently valid conception in metaphysics. If it has any relation to the art of the theater the fact has not yet been demonstrated in the form of a play. It is a mark of the tiredness of some of the arts of our day that they have taken on themselves the preoccupations of dialectics. The comparative vitality of the American theater of the period is in no respect better revealed than in the disposition it shows to scoff at the world lest it be led to weep with it.

Thomas H. Dickinson was for some years associate professor of English at the University of Wisconsin. He was the organizer of the Wisconsin Dramatic Society, and has written extensively on the drama as well as having edited several volumes of plays.

A Biographer's Delight

SCANDALOUS PRINCESS: The Exquisite Thérésia Cabarrus. By SIDNEY B. WHIPPLE. New York: The Century Company. 1932. $3.

Reviewed by BEN RAY REDMAN

THAT all the world loves a lover is a romantic fiction which is daily discredited by social experience, but there is little doubt that most of the world likes an author to be in love with his heroine. That is, of course, if he is not maudlin. Mr. Whipple is patently in love with his heroine, of the many names and many children, and he is not maudlin. On the contrary, he seems stirred by a simple fleshly emotion, and one gathers that he would very much like to have been in the shoes—shall we say?—of Jean Jacques Devin de Fontenay, Jean Lambert Tallien, Barras, Ouvrard, and those known and unknown others who are probably too numerous to mention. Thérésia's ample charms fascinate him, and her ample generosity fascinates him equally. In short, and in the language of our own century, he has fallen for this beautiful lady of a century and a half ago, and for once a reviewer may, without blushing at the hackneyed condition of the phrase, say that an author has written *con amore*. Which is not to say that he has written with understanding as well, for happily one need not understand to love. And Mr. Whipple's book would almost persuade us that, in this instance at least, to love is enough.

Still, one would like to understand this precociously lovely Thérésia Cabarrus who played so colorful a part in the later phases of the French Revolution; whom Tallien, pro-consul of the Terror, took from the straw of a Bordeaux prison, to set her up as an almost regal mistress; whose later peril, in another prison, steeled Tallien's hand against the incorruptible Robespierre; who was hailed by the people of Paris as *Notre Dame de Thermidor;* who queened it in the society of the Directory, and taught the ladies of Paris to take off as many clothes as possible; who was the mistress of Barras and of the rich army contractor Ouvrard; who befriended Josephine and put a new coat on the needy back of young Napoleone Buonaparte; who bore in all eleven children, several of whom were legitimate; and who died, after years of respectable living, in legal possession of the proud title of Princesse de Chimay.

Yes, we should like to understand her. Was she a scheming adventuress, calculating every move of a perilous, shifting game; or was she a simple, earthly, pliant creature who merely did her instinctive best to survive in circumstances beyond all human control? It was, let us admit, something of a trick to survive the Revolution by whatever means; and Thérésia was unfortunately placed at the breaking of the storm. Mr. Whipple is cavalier with her detractors.

> Those who thus write harshly of Thérésia [he asserts] may be divided into three general classifications: primus, those who worship that solemn ass Maxmilien Robespierre, and who therefore cannot forgive her from [*sic*] having assisted in the business of making an end of him; secundus, those who worship that pompous ass Napoleone Buonaparte, and who therefore cannot forgive her for knowing too much about his puny, empty-bellied beginnings; tertius, those (chiefly females) who are unlovely enough never to have been tempted toward impurity, and who lay their own superior virtue to strength of character rather than absence of opportunity.

This is vigorous, but it does not help Thérésia's case to call Napoleon a pompous ass. And when one finishes Mr. Whipple's book, one feels that he is far from sure concerning his lady's character. No man likes to believe that a beautiful woman has deceived him, and Mr. Whipple is loath to believe the worst of La Cabarrus, but he is plainly uneasy in his mind. Else why does he say, at the last, that "throughout her life Thérésia had been a consummate actress—and professional." That is not the picture he has drawn.

But, viewed from whatever point of view, Jeanne-Marie-Ignace-Thérésia Cabarrus is a biographer's delight, and Mr. Whipple's readers will delight with him, being entranced by the narrative and untroubled by the irregularities of a style that runs a gamut from Carlylese, through Guedallisms, down to occasional notes of current slang.

"Who invented the centenary?" asks Professor Ernest Barker—"To-day looking at Yesterday through an opera-glass?" and the London *Observer,* quoting Mr. Barker, goes on to say: "It is difficult to say, though the existence of the Christian Calendar, with its fixed dates and its movable ones, suggests a starting-point. The systematic celebration of the centenary probably belongs to the modern age of journalism. Certainly nobody thought about Shakespeare in 1716, and as late as 1864 the poet's birth was remembered by nothing more than the planting of a tree by Phelps on Primrose Hill (it is still there). As for Garrick's festival at Stratford in 1769, it could have had no relation to dates.

A Balanced Ration for a Week's Reading

MEMOIRS OF PRINCE VON BÜLOW. *Little, Brown.*

The third volume of these reminiscences, covering the period of the World War and the downfall of Germany.

OF THEE I SING. By GEORGE S. KAUFMAN, MORRIE RYSKIND, and IRA GERSHWIN. *Knopf.*

The Pulitzer prize play for 1931, a lampoon of American politics.

THREE GO BACK. By J. LESLIE MITCHELL. *Bobbs-Merrill.*

A tale of adventure which carries its characters back to the lost Atlantis and makes a clever application of time-space conception.

The Saturday Review of Literature

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Published weekly by the Saturday Review Co., Inc., Henry Seidel Canby, President; Roy E. Larsen, Vice-President; Noble A. Cathcart, Secretary-Treasurer, 25 West 45th Street, New York. Subscription rates per year, postpaid, in the U. S. and Mexico, $3.50; in Canada, $5; in Great Britain, 18 shillings; elsewhere $4.50. All business communications should be addressed to 25 West 45th Street, New York. Entered as second class matter at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 1, 1879. Vol. 8. No. 43.

The Saturday Review is indexed in the "Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature."

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America's Main Streets

SMALL TOWN STUFF. By ALBERT BLUMENTHAL. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1932. $4.

Reviewed by WHITING WILLIAMS

ALL to the good, certainly, is the way the sociologists are nowadays passing up the tribal customs of the aboriginal bushmen of the Australian backlands and getting around to the free whites of modern America's Main Streets. Welcome and thrice welcome, here and now, to all those further studies and reports of our typical towns and cities which are sure to follow Lynd's "Middletown" of a short while ago, and now Blumenthal's "Small Town Stuff."

Both of these are extremely timely and pertinent, calculated to give any thoughtful citizen enough and more then enough to think about. Representing, as they do, astonishing catalogues of the factors in the equation of present-day life as it is being lived around us, not one of us can alibi himself out of a genuine interest in these documents,—interest and also what the Quakers aptly call "a concern." College classroom and Rotary rostrum, pulpit and editor's desk—all these and others will do well to look in such a mirror as these reports furnish of *homo Americanus in situ*. And that holds for pulpit, desk, and rostrum in not only small town but big city as well. For—

> Mineville presents a telescoped picture of human nature of America—good and bad small children; "good girls" and sexually loose girls or "chippies"; "good boys" and libertines; "good Christian women" and wives of easy virtue; men of exemplary sex habits and adulterers; "clean" people and those known or reputed to have venereal taint; smoking and non-smoking women; teetotalers and drunkards; antigambling reformists and professional gamblers; lazy and hard workers; irresponsible and dependable workers, etc. And somewhere between the persons at each of these many extremes we find all the rest of the people in the community rated in countless shadings of degree on the same traits. . . . Only the extremely pathological and the genius seem to be absent. With such an array of character displaying itself under the limelight of small-town conditions, Mineville becomes a laboratory *par excellence* for the study of personality from the cradle to the grave.

To be sure, as is properly brought out, the small town's extraordinary "intimacy" does play here its unfailing role. But this by no means crowds off the stage the isolation and the loneliness of the metropolis. Meanwhile, the wish for individual recognition and distinction, the desire to keep up with the local Joneses, the fear of being thought "slow" and out of step, the curiosity for new experience—these and similar mainsprings operate in practically the same manner upon the inhabitants of Mineville as on those of Manhattan.

Of the two stages, not the actors but only the stage furniture, the "props," are different. And not only are those props upon the stage of Mineville changing and changing rapidly; they are also changing and changing rapidly in the direction of Manhattan. The two busy livery stables of the Main Street of former days have been replaced by strongly competing garages. "A horse is a more common sight in residence districts of Chicago than on (Mineville's) Main Street." With more than "one car for each five persons in the county, . . . nothing since the coming of the daily newspaper has so broken down Mineville's isolation as the automobile."

"The battle of the 'props' "—that might be the title for what is reported as going on hourly and daily at every sector of the conflict between the old and the new in Mineville. And very significant are the results of this battle upon the community's whole social structure. Two out of five have radios and almost that many some form of refrigerator. Roughly one-half the families have telephones, while only forty percent have bathtubs. Until sewers can be extended by the program voted in '31, this last percentage, at least, can't be expected to grow. But that may serve to boost the local population figures. For while birth control clinics may continue to be limited to the cities, the nature of the problem is not changed in the small town: in both it is at least as much a matter of inclination as of information. "A lot of people here," according to an observant woman, "wouldn't have so many kids if they had bathtubs.' "

So with the whole list of "props" and paraphernalia which make up our present-day social, civic, and commercial existence. This small town—it's said to be in Wyoming or Colorado—reveals the same perpetual underlying forces and the same changes in the patterns they weave as does the present-day city. The local sheriff enforces the law faithfully—until he observes that public opinion favors little or no punishment. The "home-girl" school teacher tends to depend upon her Uncle Ben on the school board, while the "outsider" who errs is refused re-election. "Big Business," in the shape of the Eastern concern that operates the local smeltery, takes care that the local and state newspapers don't grow too "radical" in their support of social legislation. And so on.

All decidedly human in its deeper thrusts and momentums, and all decidedly changing in the new channels created the moment these age-old currents strike the new terrain which has been built up by the good roads and autos of the citizens, the efficiency of the big utility or the chemistry of the new "super" down at the refining plant. And all more than a little depressing except as it may be—yes, *must* be—hoped that these unceasing waves of change may contrive somehow to build together for good.

But all this splendid, this universal, pertinency of the book's message forces me to make a loud complaint about the manner and method of that message's delivery. If the author's story is so altogether human in actuality, why must it be so largely dull and humdrum in report and interpretation?

If the answer were to be blamed entirely upon the reporter himself, protest here would hardly be worth making. But it is hard to believe that so painstaking, so intelligent, and so human an observer as he shows himself would prove so unimpressive an interpreter, unless somebody, somehow, somewhere, had put restrictions upon him. I strongly suspect both his director-editor and his publisher.

If the scene and pattern observed were so slightly typical of the scene and pattern of general American life that the report would have slight meaning outside college halls, then I would agree with editor and publisher in their highly evident belief that observation is everything and reporting little or nothing. But Mineville is too much the cross-section of both large city and small town America in 1931 to justify handling as though it were a stone from the Silurian epoch, of interest only to a few bespectacled, highbrow sociologists. Not only are scene and pattern American: they *are* America. When seen so fully as these have been seen, it is a shame that they cannot be made of interest to all Americans. Why should any one assume that such a study requires a free eye but a harnessed hand, a human observer but a dry-as-dust reporter?

The answer will be, of course, that only so can its data be dependable. To that, in turn, I am inclined to reply in one word: Bunk! Pretty surely the real trouble is not the editor's fear of reportorial liberty. On the contrary, it is more likely the editor's lack of either interest or training in the art of reporting, a lack falsely defended because rationalized, doubtless, as "scientific."

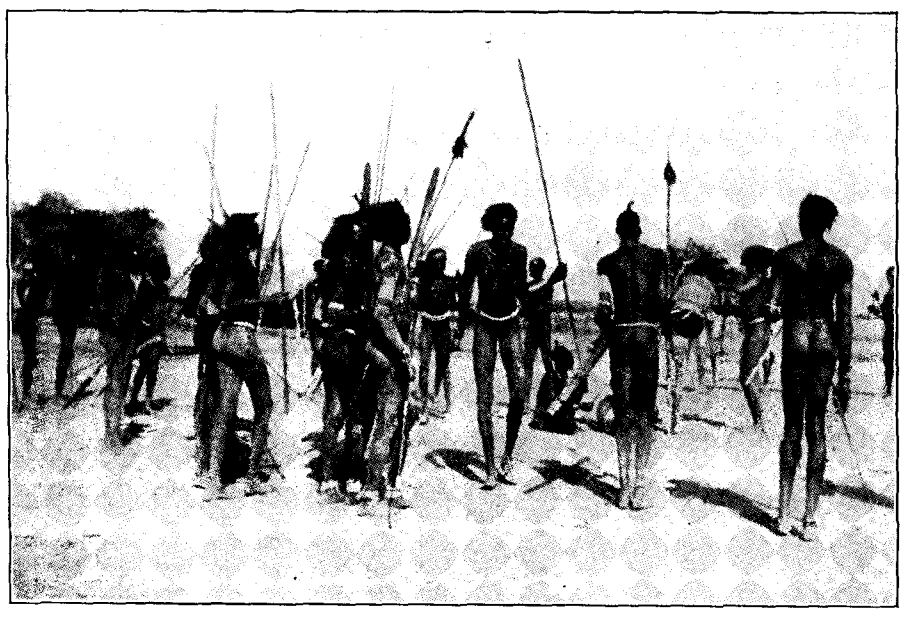
Surely it would not lessen the "scientific" value of the book if, for instance, some of the later and more interesting chapters, like "The Struggle for Existence" or "Gossip," were used to start the discussion, saving the setting for a little later on. No sightseeing bus ever feels it necessary to swing round all the streets in order to name them before taking another trip to describe the people living on them.

Of course, no student would be turned loose to make such a study until he had some training as to what to look for. I submit that he should also be given some slight smudgeon of training in the ways and means of giving to his report some measure of the flavor and aroma possessed so richly by the original before his eyes.

The generally awkward form of introducing testimony: "The oldest resident speaks of it as follows": (followed by small type); the habit of making every resident, young and old, literate and illiterate, use practically the same language; the frequent repetition of words—"made rich over-night by 'striking it rich in a mine' "; "tables" so haphazardly constructed that they are often meaningless apart from the text; the carelessness of phrase—"due to its having felt itself to have been at great cultural disadvantage" —all these and other crudities, I submit, make the whole report no more scientific. They certainly do make it decidedly less interesting and useful. And yet nothing is proved plainer by the book's own findings than that material of just this sort should somehow be made available, as I have said, for desk and pulpit, rostrum and Rotary throughout the land.

In these same columns I made mention of much the same observational skill and reportorial ineptitude of the authors of "Middletown"—though, at that, Muncie fared better in this respect than Mineville. In both, my objection to the awkward reporting varies directly with the square of my enthusiastic approval of the observation. In these trying days, help is needed, God knows, by every citizen, if some of those problems of Mineville and Middletown—and every other American town and city—are to be solved by a democratic form of government. Is it the cult of the Ph.D. in particular or of the graduate school in general that live, pertinent, thought-provoking material must be restricted to an academic and infinitesimal minority? Or will those in charge of later studies awaken to the need of stressing, along with skill in seeing for us, the art of telling to us? With all my heart I hope so.

Whiting Williams has been lecturer on labor and management problems in the Harvard Graduate School of Business, adviser to large employers in personnel and public relations, executive secretary of the Welfare Federation of Cleveland, Ohio, and is the author of numerous articles and books. Among the latter are "What's on the Worker's Mind" and "Mainsprings of Men."



NATIVE DANCERS OF THE SUDAN
From a photograph by Walter Mittelholzer in the *National Geographical Magazine*.

A Romantic Episode

THE MAHDI OF ALLAH. By RICHARD A. BERMANN. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1932. $2.50.

Reviewed by CHARLES ROLAND

EVERY portent indicated that the dervish, Mohammed Ahmed, was a saint of the Sudan. There were markings on his cheek and a front tooth was missing; he had two wives but practised ascetism; he prayed much and picturesquely; he reeked of benzoin, ambergris, and other vapored odeurs compounded of mysterious essences. When he magically restores to health a disciple, Abdullahi, this grateful adherent proclaims him the Expected Mahdi, the long-awaited Messiah of the Nile. Mohammed Ahmed concurs in this judgment. Natives join his holy banner, motivated by hatred of the Turk, of the Christian infidel, and subconsciously by the cruelty of Nature's jungle swamp alternating with limitless desert. The tom-tom sounds; Khartoum, hearing of a restlessness, summons the Mahdi who will not come; an armed force sallies forth to take him but is annihilated. Revolt spreads like a wildfire.

Mr. Bermann, an Austrian journalist, has diligently garnered the fantastic, inconceivably romantic details of this historic episode. It seems incredible that these things should be placed, not among the Arabian Nights, but in the tranquillity of the mid-Victorian era, when manners were prudish and slave-trading smacked of the impolite. Yet we know the tale is true; history recounts it; Mr. Bermann's book, moreover, is rendered authoritative by the sponsoring names of General Sir Reginald Wingate and Baron Sir Rudolf Karl Slatin Pasha—Slatin should know; he was for years a slave of Abdullahi, starved, tortured, kept in irons, escaping to help Kitchener administer the final crushing defeat to the self-same Abdullahi.

Winston Churchill, who had been a young subaltern with Kitchener at Khartoum, contributes an admirable and succinct foreword to the book, though in one respect I venture to dissent from his dictum, when he says: "This is presumably the first and last word on Mahdism." It cannot be the last word. Mr. Bermann has done his job with a praiseworthy, loving tenderness, but he is no Bulwer-Lytton. While "The Mahdi of Allah" should sell in the tens of thousands, so thrilling is its story, material still lurks there for a genuine masterpiece.

An eye to the dramatic Mr. Berman assuredly possesses, at the same time shrewdly insinuating a moral for Occidentals who still hold the Oriental zealot in low esteem, a moral taught by history but never learned. He ennobles the figure of that Scotch warrior and mystic, General "Chinese" Gordon, whose end leaves us with a profound sense of personal loss. The massacres and counter-massacres, the strange fates of the journalists, O'Donovan of the London *Daily News* and Oliver Pain of the Paris *Intransigeant*, the comic figure of Gustav Klootz, the pathetic trials of Father Ohrwalder, and a thousand other amazing items, Mr. Bermann reports excitingly and well.

Apart from its historic validity, the book entrances us with its fascinating story. I earnestly beseech the Metropolitan Opera Company to commission Stravinsky to compose an opera—settings by Joseph Urban, directed by Toscanini—of the last days of the Mahdi. He has tasted victory; he has conquered and despoiled Khartoum. Gordon's head rests on a spear before his quarters. His harem now numbers five wives and ninety-five concubines. He has grown soft and fat. To his harem he welcomes the beauteous slave, Amina. It is only natural that Amina should conceive an overwhelming passion for him; has he not caused her father and her husband to be put to death and her children to die of starvation? The basis for a great love is there; Amina becomes his favorite. Soon afterward the Mahdi falls desperately ill; an Egyptian medicine man thought it might be typhus, but Mr. Bermann intimates his death may have been caused by poison. There, Mr. Stravinsky, is your libretto.

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A Modern Christ

THE MASTER OF THE HOUSE. By RADCLYFFE HALL. New York: Jonathan Cape & Robert Ballou. 1932. $2.50.

Reviewed by ERNEST SUTHERLAND BATES

ALTHOUGH several of Radclyffe Hall's earlier, and very inferior, novels were republished in the wake of the American success of "The Well of Loneliness," "The Master of the House" is the first book to be written by her since that memorable volume. "The Well of Loneliness," it will be recalled, was suppressed in England. It is safe to say that "The Master of the House" will not be suppressed. Instead, it has been welcomed by British reviewers in tones of almost religious rapture.

American critics, accustomed to be rebuked for their tendency toward high-pitched eulogy, may obtain a perhaps ungenerous satisfaction from observing the antics of their British cousins. We read

RADCLYFFE HALL

that if "The Master of the House" had been published a century ago, "it would by now hold a unique position among the classics of world literature"; we are told that it is a work of high "literary distinction," "a rich and touching story," "a novel of great charm" which "deepens the sense of spiritual values"; one reviewer finds its war chapters "just about the finest pieces of writing" he has ever read.

"The Master of the House" as a successor to "The Well of Loneliness" reminds one of Oscar Wilde's supplement to "Dorian Gray" in "De Profundis." When in "De Profundis" the repentant pagan grovelled at the throne of grace, everyone was pleased. Wilde's earlier admirers readily detected the old spirit in the new posture; his earlier decriers were ingenuously edified by the new attitude of devotion. Allowing for the difference in literary merit, "The Master of the House" may be called Radclyffe Hall's "De Profundis." It is as superficially moving and as fundamentally false as its predecessor.

"The Well of Loneliness" was not a good novel, but it was a good work of propaganda. The writer had a thesis in which she profoundly believed; her earnestness in proclaiming it lifted the book above its weakness as a story. In "The Master of the House" she has a thesis in which she only half believes, and she uses it mainly as a means for developing her style and indulging her tender emotions. This style has a fatal fascination for many readers. Its heavily marked rhythm—"Marie . . . was as brown as the soil and as patiently faithful. Her eyes were the eyes of the beasts of the field"—gives them the same emotion that "Evangeline" gave to their grandparents. Its elaborate naiveté impresses them as "natural" and its artificial inversions are esteemed "poetic."

"The Master of the House" deals with a modern Provençal Christ. The earlier chapters with their *genre* pictures of village life do succeed in capturing much of the sunlight and warm languor of the South. Many of the minor characters are admirably drawn. There are numerous episodes that are thoroughly delightful. It is only when Miss Hall begins to concentrate her attention upon her central figure that the weakness of the book appears. For the making of Christophe, the carpenter's son, she has taken one element from the traditional conception of Christ, isolated it from the rest, and attempted to create a human being out of a single emotion. Christophe is an incarnation of pity, and he is nothing else. His capacity for sympathetic suffering is infinite; his capacity for action is nil. When his cousin Jan strikes a snake, a welt arises on Christophe's back; when he is taken out in a fishing-boat, he nearly falls ill at the sight of the dying fish; in one of the most genuinely touching passages in the book he steals the ointment from his mother's cupboard to rub on the sores of his dying dog, Mireio (Radclyffe Hall is always sincere in her dealing with dogs; indeed, the death of Mireio is described more movingly than that of the hero). When the war comes, Christophe does not protest; instead, he spinelessly joins the army; but then, sickened by a day of bloody work, he wanders off alone toward the enemy's trenches, enjoys a mystic meeting with One who tells him that He is the "Infinite Compassion," and vainly attempts to repeat this message to his uncomprehending foemen who crucify him while he looks toward the dawn. Christophe's last futile gesture is almost the only effort he ever makes, aside from the stealing of the ointment, to express his pity in action.

The whole volume, in fact, is a book of noble poses and of futile gestures. One example of the symbolism in which it abounds will illustrate the falseness of Miss Hall's scriptural analogies. A hot-blooded Southern wench in love with Christophe proposes to him that they take their pleasure without waiting for his doubtful return from the war and a legal marriage; he throws up his arms in horror and they remain rigid, transfixed with pain, as if upon a cross. Now some medieval monk, doubtless, might have used this tremendous symbolism on so trivial an occasion with perfect sincerity. But Miss Hall uses it theatrically, solely for its effect.

Gloating over one's own emotions of pity and a ritualistic delight in sacred symbols regardless of their meaning are not the way to "deepen the sense of spiritual values." One need not be a very orthodox Christian to resent an interpretation of Christ's love of humanity which confuses it with a mere feeling of compassion. Jesus of Nazareth and the World War are both of them much too serious to us to be complacently turned over to Radclyffe Hall as material for the subjective ecstasies of her devouring ego.

Ice Age to Frigidaire

THREE GO BACK. By J. LESLIE MITCHELL. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co. 1932. $2.

Reviewed by CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

I HOPE your reviewer doesn't seem too breathless about this magnificent yarn. Here's an adventure story for intelligent people, written by a man of science and a man of feeling. Leslie Mitchell, a Scottish archæologist, who is a student of prehistoric American civilizations, had the noble idea to transfer three modern people to the fabulous continent of Atlantis. He does it by a Zeppelin disaster and by touching off two Einsteinian Space-Time spirals. So his three moderns—a pacifist, an armament baron, and an alluring young woman—find themselves in the volcanic savannahs of 20,000 years ago, with the first shivers of the Ice Age approaching. Among beasts of the early prime, mammoths and aurochsen and saber-toothed tigers, and among a Cro-Magnon tribe of nude golden-skinned hunters, they find that the cave-man was not the crude bestial of the cinema but a friendly, unspoiled child. (Perhaps Rousseau was right.) The Neanderthal men, when they encounter them, are something very different—but I shall not damage your pleasure by unfair disclosure.

You may think me excessive, but I find this a glorious book. It has all the thrill that Rider Haggard and Conan Doyle gave our youth, but done with new and cunning grace, and with mischievous humor. It cracks right into the subconscious intuition of almost everyone today, that modern civilization has made a sorry mess of things, and at least it's pleasant to imagine there once was a Golden Age. Romance and science and a genius of good story-telling are here wound up together in perfect efficiency. This is what the Literature of Escape was intended to be, the sheer magic of the impossible. In the candor of its ticklish situations "Three Go Back" is charmingly of today; in its poetic vision it is as old as Homer or the oldest fairy tale. I should like to imagine 100,000 people laying aside the woes and colics of our flea-bitten life to revel in this cosmic adventure. This is my own private candidate for the Book of the Summer for all people who have not been irretrievably calloused by the twentieth century. From the Ice Age of 20,000 B.C. to the Frigidaire Epoch of 1932 is a long jump, but Mr. Mitchell manages it by a trick of great ingenuity. And—oh visions of glamor—what a movie!

Love and Passion

THE RATS OF NORWAY. By J. KEITH WINTER. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1932. $2.50.

Reviewed by GLADYS GRAHAM

EVERY few years thousands of rats swim out from the coast of Norway and never return. This suicidal passion for migration has baffled scientists and now intrigues a novelist who sees in the mad push of the lemmings toward their own annihilation a likeness to the dark, destructive urges that drive men out of the safe and sane ways that they have plotted for themselves.

It is impossible in writing of "The Rats of Norway" to avoid words that have grown warped and dull from too much use and misuse. For Mr. Winter has written a book about love and passion, and there is no synonymic escape from the fact. One is reminded of D. H. Lawrence, the earlier pre-apocalyptic Lawrence, fighting for the inviolable laws of the self, demanding of his love that she recognize the otherness of him, "the terrible *other* . . . the fearful *other flesh* . . . unfathomable and fearful, contiguous and concrete." Like Lawrence, Mr. Winter shatters into sharp, separate tendencies the various elements that are usually considered together as "love." The lovers embroil as they embrace, with a demand from each that his love shall be *the* love, and blind to the different demand of the other.

The setting of this novel is an English boys' school. The little, artificially constructed world shuts all the characters in together with their passions and peculiarities. The chief figure is young Stevan Beringer, the latest instructor to arrive. With him the reader comes to know the other members of the scholastic autocracy: the headmaster who is a glorified boy scout, the other teachers whose natures find various expressions ranging from casual boredom to active perversion. A few of the students and parents are introduced to complete the vicious circle, and Mr. Winter lightens his story with the surface ironies incidental to such groupings.

This school life is the rack upon which is stretched the material of the story, the turbulent, destroying passion that binds and breaks four of the characters. Stevan and the young teacher of music are drawn to each other by likeness of tastes. The attraction grows, in such favorable soil, until the bonds are strongly forged. Gradually the abysmal differences of their natures become apparent. Tilly, wanting love to fill her whole life with never a nook or cranny for anything else, wanting constant reiteration of her lover's interest, continual reassurance of his constancy, seeing her possessive attitude alienating Stevan and yet absolutely unable to modify her behavior; Stevan, wanting a full life with love just one element of it, wanting the obvious taken for granted without repeated avowals, wanting above all to be free of the usurping love that insists upon giving more than is asked for.

The other couple is older but no wiser in the ways of adaptability. The headmaster's wife, the very beautiful Jane, has found no other outlet in marriage for her vital feeling for life than in being the perfect hostess and the power behind the throne in school affairs. These are but dry makeshifts for the fulness she desires. Sebastian is one of the instructors. Knocked up by the war, he has found life even thinner going than has Jane. Drink in excess has only helped in moderation. These two would seem to have in common nothing but their contempt for the sterility of the day-in, day-out school routine. But they are swept together with an impetus as undeniable and as fatal as that which swirls the lemmings out to sea.

From these human enslavements, in which the moments never compensate for the hours, Mr. Winter has created something as fresh and living as if the theme had not been worked up by novelist after novelist. With no obvious shifting back and forth from the dark currents of his story to the pleasanter rippling surfaces, the author has kept his novel free of the depressing bogs which mire so many young writers when they first look upon life to find it futile. The book is in key with reality; the characters, leaving their secret closets, shut the doors behind them and face life with decent, if slightly askew, masks for the world. In a style which might almost be called the simple declarative, the story is told for what it is worth. "The Rats of Norway" is more restrained than Mr. Winter's earlier "Other Man's Sauce," the author directs his material instead of letting it direct him, and without any loss of force there has been a decided gain in form.

Letters of Mrs. Carlyle

MRS. CARLYLE TO JOSEPH NEUBERG. Edited by TOWNSEND SCUDDER. New York: The Oxford University Press. 1932. $3.

MR. SCUDDER has drawn upon the archives of the National Library, Edinburgh, Scotland, for this brief collection of letters which shows Mrs. Carlyle as the lively and affectionate friend, a correspondent whose vivacity, naturalness,and ability to

MRS. CARLYLE
FROM JACKET DESIGN FOR "MRS. CARLYLE TO JOSEPH NEUBERG."

invest the trivial incident with interest marked her out as the born letter writer. The epistles are some of them mere notes and are none of them of any considerable length; they deal with the small happenings of the writer's days, touch with sprightliness upon inadvertences and slight domestic incidents, contain occasional glancing but revelatory references to her husband, and everywhere manifest a gracious and warm personality. Joseph Neuberg, to whom the correspondence is addressed, was a German merchant resident in England, of keen intellectual interests and vast admiration for Carlyle. Having been introduced to the latter by Emerson he straightway entered into a firm friendship with him and his wife, and ultimately, after his retirement from business, became Carlyle's secretary. When he later returned to Germany for a time the Carlyles visited him there, and their friendship with him continued a lively one until Neuberg's death brought it to an end.

The slim little book into which the letters have been made is charming in form and content, though its price seems an excessive amount to charge for so slight a volume.

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The BOWLING GREEN

Human Being

XVII. MRS. GESCHWINDT

LUCILLE would never mention the exact address of their Morningside Park era, but Hubbard learned from old Mrs. Geschwindt, the mother of Lucille and Hazel, that it was in the 300 block on West 114th Street, notable still for its wonderful façade of fire-escapes. These fire-escapes were a sore point with poor Lucille, who regarded them as infra dig, a suggestion of East Side tenements. It was on those iron projections that so many of the galley proofs caught and fluttered. But Mrs. Geschwindt had no patience with social pretenses. She was a remarkable old lady, over eighty when Hubbard met her. She was still living with Herman and Hazel, but mostly confined to her room. Her daughters, keenly aware of her freedom of speech, did not afford Hubbard much opportunity to interview her. The hullabaloo of the war years had given them a regrettable sensitiveness about their German inheritance. One of the great triumphs of Mrs. Geschwindt's decline was the last time they took her to the movies. A news-reel picture of the old warrior Von Hindenburg was shown on the screen, and something of unconquerable human fibre in the aged shadow brought the audience into unexpected applause. Mrs. Geschwindt broke into tears and had to be helped home. Her wrinkled old face, which had no eyebrows, trembled convulsively. She was too staunch to say it, but her feeling was that having actually heard Hindenburg applauded by an American audience she could die content. And so she did, not long afterward. Hazel had a twinge of honorable pity when she found, hidden away among the old lady's treasures, a secret scrapbook in which she had pasted the picture of the Kaiser which they had made her abandon during the War.

I wish there were room to dwell upon Mrs. Geschwindt. It would be significant of the endless radiations that proceed from any nucleus of life. She was born as long ago as 1850 and came to this country as a child, just before the Civil War. She still remembered the ball given in her honor at Meyer's Hotel in Hoboken when she accepted Mr. Geschwindt. Her daughters thought her tedious, but she was heartily fond of Richard because he listened, with every sign of interest, to her reminiscences. One of the happiest afternoons of her life was when Richard smuggled her out and took her to a matinee of *The Black Crook* revival in Hoboken. *The Black Crook* had been the scandal of her youth—and to see it again in the mellow Teuton air of Hoboken was paradise regained. They had a glass of beer afterward at Meyer's, and she described how the hotel furniture had been arranged fifty years before. Her keen little eyes had observed that some of the modern Black Crook amazons had needed padding to represent the traditional hour-glass contour; she lamented this and embarked upon genial memories of the age of flesh. She talked German with the waiters, and when Richard finally got her back to the Schmaltz apartment she was prostrated with ecstasy and hiccups. Herman and Hazel were shocked, and called in the doctor; but I think myself that the adventure prolonged her life by about two years. She outlived Richard.

How lovely they are, the Old, when the jealousies and skirmishes have lost their importance. And specially so, perhaps, old ladies. Woman's years of maturity are bedevilled by so many imps: the moon, the hormones, and the clownishness of man. No wonder, if they escape that maze of nerves, they show themselves so wise and humorous, so tartly humane. Illusions of grandeur fade away; so much they anguished over proves of small account. They cherish laughter—what else is there? Character and comedy and the beauties of past grievance come out upon the face. Hurry up and grow old, my dears (I sometimes think), so I can love you with the disinterest you deserve. Why are there not more Old People in novels? Chaucer and Shakespeare understood about the old. Mrs. Geschwindt and Cicero would have got along splendidly. I see all the old people in the world smiling at us as we muddle and fume. They have absorbed so much more sunlight.

I like them to have their pleasure thinking our antics don't really matter. They may be wrong.

But this was long afterward; we are talking now of the Morningside Park epoch—say about 1913-14. Mrs. Geschwindt, then in the prime of her sixties, was recently a widow and full of energy. The Schmaltzs, whose apartment near Riverside Drive was so much envied by Lucille, found it hard to keep track of her. The old lady's genetic instincts had never been satisfied with Hazel and Lucille; she needed children to look after, and horrified Hazel by taking a camp-stool out to the sunny pavement of Broadway. On one of those church corners where by Upper West Side tradition curators of children congregate, Mrs. Geschwindt would lie in wait for an interesting baby. Occasionally she could persuade some nursemaid or mother to entrust the child to her. Her reliability was patent, and while the grateful woman did her errands or telephoned her young man, Mrs. Geschwindt patrolled the pavement with the infant. It was a matter of indignation to poor Lucille that her mother seemed more interested in random urchins of Broadway than in her own granddaughter. Indeed, the old lady's blonde heart was strangely fascinated by the luxuriant babes of that region. In those large velveteen eyes, gilded chubs of skin, and delicious nubbins of soft nose she could see in microscope the future lineaments of rabbi and theatrical producer.

But again it was really the abrupt palisade below Morningside Drive that caused trouble. Mrs. Geschwindt, though sturdy enough, was short of breath in climbing stairs: Lucille, until Gladys grew a little older, could not hoist the baby up those difficult terraces. So, while Gladys was still in the perambulator era, Mrs. Geschwindt would look off from the bastions on top and wave to Lucille far below, with all the grimness of a grandmother deprived of her rights. And Lucille, equally wearied in mind and muscle, was the more indignant at this social abyss. It was at the Carl Schurz statue that Mrs. Geschwindt most often gazed down upon her sundered grand-offspring; her annoyance vented itself upon the figure of Mr. Schurz who stands in bronze holding his hat in hand. Mrs. Geschwindt thought him a German insufficiently imperial in sentiment, and had the good old-fashioned idea that a real German always keeps his hat on.

It was an excellent day when Gladys grew old enough to toddle at least part way up the ascent, and they agreed upon the comfort station terrace as a convenient compromise meeting-place. Hubbard wondered, when old Mrs. Geschwindt told him all this in her racy way, whether it was that early exercise in climbing which had made Gladys so shapely. About the time the War began in Europe, Mrs. Geschwindt was able to exercise the child along the upper levels of the park, or sit with her in those pentagonal terraces along Morningside Drive, while Lucille did her marketing on 8th Avenue under the enormous L. It was still a very carefully rationed shopping, for Richard's salary was only $40 a week, though the January salesmen's bonus added substantially if the year had been a good one. The bonus of January 1914 was over $900, and Lucille began to dream of getting away from the L and the fire-escapes.

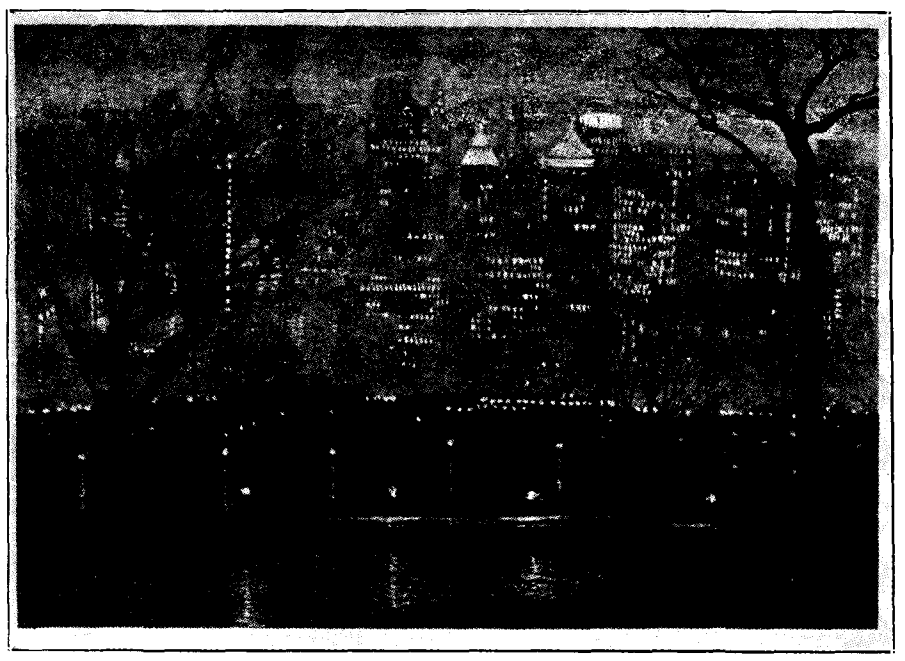
Another reason for Lucille's resentment was that her brother-in-law Herman had now been shifted to sell Boston and Philadelphia (Boston was considered a big plum for a salesman in those days), and Richard was put on the Middle-Western territory. This meant that Herman was at home a good part of the time, while Richard was away. In Hazel's most casual remarks, if one knew how to look, one might discover—even though unintended—allusions to this situation. Not wives of diplomats or cabinet members are more distraught by official precedence than the wives of travelling men who cover rival routes. In the course of several years' listening Hazel had learned the names of many personalities in the Middle-Western trade; when now these names began to appear innocently in Lucille's quotations from Richard, Hazel had a way of gently corrugating her forehead—or an even more damning way of saying nothing. Also, Hazel sometimes accompanied Herman on a business trip to Boston, and was not loath to give the impression that she had been brilliantly entertained by the gallant bibliophiles of the Hub. Richard, immersed in the ardors of salesmanship, did not suspect the innumerable ways in which affectionate women can make each other miserable.

For now, travelling the Trade proper instead of the old casualty list of Jobs and Remainders, he began to be aware of the fascination of the work. This is something that a salesman rarely puts into expression, but of which, as an artist, he is keenly conscious. How delightful it is to return to the high spots of his route, famous bookstores where against that colored tapestry of bindings he sees friends waiting to greet him. Even when it is tradition, or good sagacity, for them to pretend that he arrives as a nuisance, both sides know that is only part of the comedy of human intercourse. If he is a man well-liked, and representing a good line, he comes not only as a friend and an assistant but brings something of the aura of romance, adventure, excitement, that the voyager always brings to the sedentary. Richard learned the special characteristics and crotchets of each shop he visited. There was Kitty Chambers in Cleveland, who would always be found in her Poetry corner and always alluded to the time Daisy Erskine high-hatted her in the New York office. There was Bill Kromesky in Buffalo who kept a vast pile of a certain biography stacked up where his eyes often visited it. Richard offered to take them back, but Bill wouldn't hear of it. "That's the most valuable bunch of books in this shop," he said. "I keep 'em there to remind me never to buy more than fifty copies of anything."

Richard probably never attempted to analyze the sensuous impressions of bookstores, but they were real in his mind. The jumbled colors of the lively jackets, the faintly sweet odor of print, the quick glance of the eye by which a salesmen can spot his own wares among so many others, the intuition by which he knows whether customers are actually buying or just looking. The tact by which he effaces himself when the clerk is approached by a customer and yet remains within earshot to hear what is being asked for. Perhaps most thrilling of all to a man with mercantile curiosity is the book department in great department stores, where an island of literature is approached through a surf of feminine perfume and scuffle. Here there is a crisp lineny smell, little cuckoo-bells keep absurdly sounding, there is the distant clang of elevators, the bright eyes of young nymphs in black muslin seem absurdly frolicsome to be recommending the sombre grievances of some middle-aged novelist. In the department store, which is a microcosm of life itself, books find their relative level: they are on the ground floor, or sometimes on a balcony, but they have to be approached through other competing delights. At the entrance of such a store, on a windy day in Detroit, the revolving doors must have set up a spinning eddy of air, for as Richard entered he noticed a queer thing. Some brightly colored little female handkerchiefs, on the corner of a near showcase, jumped up from the counter, did a dancing twirl, and subsided. He could not believe it at first, and paused to watch. Presently the doors slewed round and it happened again: two scraps of colored tissue leaped upward and somersaulted. It seemed as preposterously magical as everything else in that great bazaar of feminine excitement. He was telling his buyer about it and a dark girl from the stationery department overheard. "I'm glad we've got *some* merchandise that's moving," she said.

(To be continued)

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.



CENTRAL PARK, BY STEFAN HIRSCH.
FROM "CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN PRINTS" (AMERICAN ART DEALERS' ASSOCIATION).

Cinderella Coronata

I HAVE stood in the bread line for centuries
(Since the last time you and I loved each other)
Shifting from one ragged foot to the other ragged foot
Inching along;
At last it was my turn at the golden wicket:
Gabriel muttered "Next, please."
I said boldly, "How about a little love, Your Honor?"
And there you were
Yourself in person, not a motion picture—
You pulled me up behind you
Me drab, dishevelled, undistinguished,
Riding pillion on Pegasus
Behind you, cherubicund, patiently smiling,
For an infinite tour of the universe
Including zenith, perihelion, the ultimate apex . . .
Oh prince, oh Pegasus, have I deserved this?

FLORENCE BECKER.

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Round about Parnassus

By WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

ON THE ECONOMIC CRISIS

THE John Day Company has launched a series of pamphlets of which the only one that concerns me here is Hermann Hagedorn's *The Three Pharaohs.* This is a poem he delivered before the Harvard Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa, and, inasmuch as it deals with current economic conditions, and is pamphleteering as well as poetry, it is included in a series consisting for the most part of prose pamphlets on economic subjects. Stuart Chase, Stalin, Walter Lippmann, Charles A. Beard, and Rexford Guy Tugwell are the best known of the other contributors. Hagedorn's poem is prefaced by a publishers' foreword which, because they feel that the poem "should be read with quick apprehension," gives a brief prose résumé of it. The poet's thesis is that the contemporary industrial crisis reveals a multitude enslaved. Industrialism is the Black Pharaoh. The current rise of communistic thought promises a new order, which is essentially a new order of slavery—the Red Pharaoh. Liberty, for which our ancestors fought, is now anathema to reactionaries and regarded as waste. "Men must be wheels," cogs in one great machine. In this belief capitalist and communist are at one. The Red Pharaoh in fact is heard to address the poet:

"Slave of a dream! What are the stars to you?
I have the answer of the heights and deeps.
Man is a cog. Gleaming, sharp-edged, precise,
He moves another cog; sharp-edged, precise,
Yet a third cog moves him. He turns, they turn.
A thousand cogs, harmonious, each in another
Thrust, and revolving in far areas
Unquestioningly unseen hierarchies
Of cogs, revolving other hierarchies
Beyond, into the faint infinitudes
Of space and time, revolving and revolving
Cogs to immaculate and measured ends,
Remotely planned: This, this is the new earth,
And this is the new heaven!"

CHOICE OF PHAROAHS

To which the poet naturally replies that there is, nevertheless, a deathless desire for freedom in the spirit in Man. But, "Must we be tossed forever Between the sable and the scarlet pharaoh?" he questions. "Is there no choosing, save a choice of yokes?" Tomorrow prosperity will come again, but it will bring with it merely the old triumph of greed, heedless of organization and plan. Yet there is a third pharaoh, "harshest of them all, Driving with whips to cold and desolate marshes Bright hungers, winged with flame." He rules in Man's heart, for "There is in man a singing not of earth." That is the last line of the poem. It is this pharaoh that may save Man, the pharaoh of the dreamer and the poet, kindling him to prophecy, impatient of the dust.

The scheme of the poem is good. It reminds us of a greater poem, on much the same theme, written in a different manner by the late William Vaughn Moody and entitled "The Brute," a forceful picture of the ruin wrought by Industrialism. Yet, as Moody saw it, "the Brute must [also] bring the good time on."

All the strongholds that he built
For the powers of greed and guilt—
He must strew their bastions down the sea and choke their towers with silt;

and so on. Over a quarter of a century ago that prophecy was made! It has not yet come true. But hope springs eternal in the poetic breast. Hagedorn's poem ends on a like prophetic note, though it is very unlike in treatment. As poetry it is not in the same class with Moody's, and as poetry written today it cannot be ranked particularly high. It is lucid and dramatic, but its language is somewhat flat. And when I compare its emphasis on men having become but cogs in a machine—great and little wheels—with G. K. Chesterton's propagandist poem about men as wheels, I find the latter far more forceful and memorable. Also, when one examines Hagedorn's argument closely, one cannot but reflect that a great many crimes indeed have been committed in the name of the Liberty he praises, not the least of which may be laid at the door of the unrestricted competition in business that the old idea of Liberty fostered. Eventually, it is my belief, a rational organization of industry will emerge, one which will leave scope for the free play of individuality and at the same time prevent privileged individuals from preying upon the many. The poet, it is true, looks beyond the material world, and quite properly; but, just the same, the equitable ordering of the material world is at present our most burning problem.

A NEW NEGRO POET

Sterling Brown (*Southern Road,* Harcourt, Brace) is a new negro poet to whom James Weldon Johnson introduces us in his foreword to Brown's book. Brown is of the "Younger Group" of negro writers. I myself think his work has distinctly more originality and power than that of Countée Cullen, and more range than that of Langston Hughes. Says Johnson:

> For his raw material he dug down into the deep mine of Negro folk poetry. He found the unfailing sources from which sprang the Negro folk epics and ballads such as "Stagolee," "John Henry," "Casey Jones," "Long Gone John," and others.

The fact that Brown is so good a narrative poet has inclined me toward him because of my particular interest in narrative verse. When he handles dialect he does so with precision and great effectiveness. A prime example of this is the colloquy between "Old Man Buzzard" and young Fred. Brown can also command real pathos and grimness. His Sam Smiley, the buck dancer, was taught by the whites in the Great War to rip up bellies with a bayonet. When he came back from the war and found that a rich white man had ruined his girl, he retaliated by killing him. But the poem ends in no breakdown into sentimentality. This is the last verse:

The oaken leaves drowsed prettily,
The moon shone down benignly there;
And big Sam Smiley, King Buckdancer,
Buckdanced on the midnight air.

BROWN'S VERSATILITY

"Strong Men," with its text from a poem of Carl Sandburg's, is powerfully racial; "Memphis Blues," on the second section, with its vision of Memphis on fire, has a stirring rhythm; "Children of the Mississippi" holds all the menace of the river floods. The poet can strike out original simile, as in "Tornado Blues," which opens

Black wind come a-speedin' down de river from de Kansas plains,
Black wind come a-speedin' down de river from de Kansas plains,

Illustration from "Southern Road"

Black wind come a-roarin' like a flock of giant œroplanes—

and the three poems about Slim Greer relate humorous negro fables with inimitable unction. The one about Slim about to land a job in a café, where the proprietor tells him that the negro now employed is so slow he is going to be fired, has these peerless last four verses:

A noise rung out
In rush a man
Wid a tray on his head
An' one in each han'

Wid de silver in his mouf
An' de soup plates in his vest
Pullin' a red wagon
Wid all the rest. . . .

De man'se said, "Dere's
Dat slow coon now
Dat wuthless lazy waiter!"
An' Slim says, "How?"

An' Slim threw his gears in
Put it in high,
An' kissed his hand to Arkansaw,
Sweetheart . . . good-bye!

That preserves all the flavor of genuine folk-song. "Strange Legacies" is an invocation of an original sort. "Sporting Beasley" and "Cabaret" are highly-colored. And then, in the final section, the sonnet "Rain," and the poems "Thoughts of Death" and "Against that Day," all entirely uncolloquial, are unusually well fashioned. I have space to quote the first one merely:

RAIN

Outside the cold, cold night; the dripping rain. . . .
The water gurgles loosely in the eaves,
The savage lashes stripe the rattling pane
And beat a tattoo on November leaves.
The lamp wick gutters, and the last log steams
Upon the ash-filled hearth. Chill grows the room.
The ancient clock ticks creakily and seems
A fitting portent of the gathering gloom.

This is a night we planned. This place is where
One day, we would be happy; where the light
Should tint your shoulders and your wild flung hair,—
Whence we would—oh, we planned a merry morrow—
Recklessly part ways with the old hag, Sorrow. . . .
Outside the dripping rain; the cold, cold night.

Of the younger negro poets, I consider Sterling A. Brown to be the most versatile and the least derivative.

"Shakespeare's birthday," says the London *Observer,* "has had, as a rule, less honor than Burns's: even the tercentenary in 1864 had very meagre celebration. The date is rather a guess, and the fact that the poet died on April 23 may have accounted for the preference for that day over others of equal probability. All that can be said is that Shakespeare was born not later than the 23rd, for there is the evidence of his monument that on that day in 1616 he had begun his fifty-third year.

"As for Saint George, who is also a rival for the honors of the day, his record is as vague, and almost as controversial, as Shakespeare's is. As against Gibbon and Eusebius, we may prefer the spirited version of the saintly career published a few years ago, which began:

> St. George 'e was a Bishop of somewheres in the East;
> 'E slew a horrid dragon, a most repulsive beast,
> With mailyfisted talyons ans flammenwerfer gorge:
> I 'olds with no such insecks, says 'is Oliness St. George.
> St. George 'e was a Bishop, and as such dispensed the Word
> To Greeks and Jews and Infidels, the Arab and the Kurd:
> They raged together 'orful; their souls was 'ard to save;
> But George 'e learned 'em Christian ways, and taught 'em to be'ave."

And here is a poetical outburst elicited by another great man which appeared nearer home than London though quoted there,—in fact in a paper in Little Rock, Ark., which thus added its mite to the anti-Darwin campaign:

> Evolution, God now mocketh,
> Capp'd and gown'd she boldly walketh,
> But unmasked she quickly stalketh,
> Back to Hell's deep, gloomy pit for evermore.

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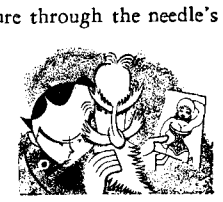

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Foreign Literature

The Noble Savage

DIALOGUE CURIEUX ENTRE L'AUTEUR ET UN SAUVAGE DE BON SENS QUI A VOYAGE ET MEMOIRES DE L'AMERIQUE SEPTENTRIONALE. Par BARON DE LAHONTAN. Publiés par GILBERT CHINARD. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press. 1931. $4.

Reviewed by HARRY HAYDEN CLARK

University of Wisconsin

IN keeping with current concern with the beginning rather than the end, "the chief thing of all," as the Greeks reminded us, much detective acumen has been lavished upon the origins of eighteenth century ideas which bore fruit in the French Revolution and which underlie many of the assumptions popular today. It has long been recognized that the pregnant antithesis between the natural and the civilized man owed much to the early reports of travelers in the New World, and Lahontan's bitter attack in 1703 upon European ecclesiasticism and despotism, which he contrasted with pictures of the Arcadian life of the Noble Savage, has long been accepted as a powerful factor in inciting the naturalistic mind to war against throne and altar. Ruined by the intricacies of legal procedures, exiled by Louis XIV, embittered by poverty, Lahontan naturally grew to hate civilization and to see his early life among the savages of Canada through a retrospective haze glamorously rose-tinted. The vogue of this antithesis, cleverly eluding censorship through the ruse of an attempt in dialogue to refute a savage's arguments, is suggested by the fact that the "Dialogues" ran to more than thirty editions in that seed-time of ideas. Lahontan's work was made easily available in 1905 in R. G. Thwaites's edition of the English translation of 1703.

Now Professor Chinard, a renowned Nimrod among source-hunters, a veteran in tracking eighteenth century ideas to their lairs, has given us an excellent edition in the original French, of a part of the material included in Thwaites's work, together with a valuable introduction of some seventy pages also in French. The Introduction sketches Lahontan's life, describes the various editions of his work and their contents, the role of Gueudeville in editing and revising Lahontan's work, and presents evidence of Lahontan's influence upon such men as Steele, Swift, and Goldsmith in England, and Delisle, Le Sage, Joubert de la Rue, Maubert de Gouvert, Montesquieu, Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot, Bougainville, and Chateaubriand in France. While Professor Chinard includes a third section of the "Conversations de L'Auteur avec un Sauvage Distingué," "qui constitue une véritable addition," more radical, and "revu probablement par Gueudeville," scholars will still have to go to Thwaites's edition for Lahontan's work contained in his first volume, for valuable notes in the text, and for the important bibliography by Paltsits. And since the English translation was the version influencing English literature, many will prefer to read the work in English as given by Thwaites. Why, incidentally, do university presses, which are supposed to cater to the needs of scholars, most of whom are proverbially poor, insist upon preventing scholars from owning the books they need, which could generally be printed for a dollar, by printing luxurious editions at four and five dollars?

While Professor Thwaites and others recognized and stated most of Professor Chinard's general conclusions about the presence in Lahontan of the thought of Rousseau, Voltaire, the Encyclopedists, and Chateaubriand, Professor Chinard thinks that "c'était bien la première fois que l'on rencontrait, présenté dans un ouvrage maniable, dépouillé de tout appareil d'érudition, le précis de ce que les Déistes et les Sociniens disent de plus fort contre le soumission que nous devons à la foy." Consequently this French traveler's work of 1703 should necessitate, this French scholar thinks, a partial revision of the time-honored view, held by such scholars of cosmopolitan thought as Hettner, Texte, Villemain, De Maistre, Buckle, Morley, Cestre, and others, that eighteenth century radicalism is essentially of English origin. Perhaps. And yet, before English claims are entirely surrendered, one wonders if more adequate attention should not be paid to Lahontan's historical and philosophic setting, considered with the scholarly precision which Professor Chinard advocates and generally practices, but which one scarcely recognizes in his dismissal of the subject by saying "ces idées étaient véritablement dans l'air." We recall that deism was fathered by Herbert of Cherbury's "De Veritate" as early as 1624, and that in 1675 Stillingfleet's "Letter to a Deist"—on "so common a Theme among the Scepticks of this Age"—summarizes, to refute, seven arguments which include practically all those advanced by Lahontan, as well as by later English deists such as Wollaston, Tindal, and Morgan. From then on, deism was common. Dryden, for example, attacked it in his Preface to "Religio Laici" in 1682, and William Stephens in his "Account of the Growth of Deism" in 1696 assigned eight reasons for its widespread existence. The presence, then, of deism in 1703 in a French book would not necessarily prove that later deism is ultimately of French origin. But then, Professor Chinard graciously asks only for "*un chapitre* sur ses origines françaises!" One wonders to what extent early English deists, perhaps indirectly, in connection with the liberalism of the late Renaissance of which they and Locke are a part, may have given travelers the preconceived theories and criteria which made their wishful and romantic "observations" so radical, which may have inspired them to give their abstract dreams a concrete habitation in the New World. Such being a reasonable hypothesis, one wishes Professor Chinard had followed Professor Thwaites's example in providing his text with notes indicating, for the plain man, to what extent Lahontan's description of the Utopian life of the savages is intrinsically and historically *true*, a point to be settled in part, no doubt, by ascertaining to what extent his reports are in accord with collateral contemporary testimony and with scientific investigation. An ignorant reader, for example, wonders whether it is true that the health of Indians is such that they live to "the age of a Hundred and forty"; one wonders whether it is true that unmarried Indians are entirely unconventional in their devotion to promiscuous free love and whether there really was "no jealousy" among them and no wish to evade resulting responsibilities.

As Professor Chinard modestly confesses even after his important books on exoticism and the work of other scholars, "almost all" the work of studying the origins of eighteenth century radicalism remains to be done. We shall await eagerly the "Histoire Documentaire du Primitivisme" which he is preparing in conjunction with Professors Boas and Lovejoy.

Missionary Life

A PASSPORT TO CHINA. By LUCY SOOTHILL. London: Hodder & Stoughton. 1931.

Reviewed by KENNETH SAUNDERS

WHAT Mrs. Buck's "The Good Earth" does so admirably for the Chinese peasant, Mrs. Soothill has done for a missionary family in China. In "A Passport to China" she tells the story of a long sojourn in the Far West of that fascinating but difficult country, and of friendly contacts with all types of Chinese, from peasant to mandarin. Her work, which is, alas, posthumous, has been lovingly and skilfully edited by Lady Hosie, her daughter, herself well known as a writer of charm and knowledge, her "Portrait of a Chinese Lady" being a good companion to her mother's book.

Here, then, is the story of early days and of pioneer work in an inland province of China. "My first experience of China was a riot; my last a revolution," says Mrs. Soothill in conclusion, and the picture of a delicate and sensitive woman enduring cheerfully and entering with zest into strange experiences is admirably done. Much foolish talk about the futility of missions and the lack of culture of missionaries will be silenced by a reading of it.

In many intimate scenes we find East and West mingling, learning to study and to understand and to respect one another, and there are many fine tributes here to the sterling qualities of Chinese assistants, from colporteurs to learned language teachers. The reader will enjoy no less the stories of peril by land and sea, and of the gradual change from suspicion and anger to friendship and esteem, with interludes such as the Revolution of 1911, with its various opportunities of service and of steadfast courage. Here, too, are good glimpses of Chinese efforts to suppress the opium traffic, and of the beginnings of the industrialization and modernization of that amazing country.

The illustrations are chosen with loving care to illustrate the Chinese scene, and there are not only types but portraits of the Chinese friends mentioned in the letter-press.

Foreign Notes

"CARMEN," the new translation of teh libretto of Bizet's opera in which John Galsworthy has collaborated with his wife, is shortly to be published in England. The edition is limited.

Robert Louis Stevenson's piano, which was made specially for him by a German firm to withstand the tropical climate of Samoa, has been discovered in New Zealand. It was sold with the rest of his property in Apia some years after his death.

"Don Quixote" is to be the subject of the first talking film in which Chaliapin is to play the hero. He is said to be composing three songs for it.

Emil Ludwig has been in Rome collecting material for a life of Mussolini. He has been visiting El Duce daily and holding long conversations with him.

A League of British Dramatists has been formed under the auspices of the Authors' Society to protect the interests of British playwrights all over the world. Among its patrons are Sir James Barrie, Sir Arthur Pinero, Bernard Shaw, and John Galsworthy.

Desmond McCarthy, says *John O'London's Weekly*, is to write a life of Bernard Shaw—with Shaw's approval and assistance.

Aldous Huxley is dramatizing his last novel, "Brave New World."

"A few months ago," says the Constantinople correspondent of the London *Observer*, "the eye of a Turkish university professor fell on an old document lying in the street. A brief examination showed him that it was of some historic importance, and on making inquiries he learned that it belonged to eighty bales of archives which had been sold as waste paper.

"Thus broke out a scandal, which for a number of weeks occupied public interest. It was revealed that the documents had been purchased by a Bulgarian, and that some of them were of historical value.

"Diplomatic negotiations with the Bulgarian Government followed, and resulted in the sending back of the bales through the Turkish Legation at Sofia.

"They have now arrived at Istanbul, but attention is being called to the fact that a number are missing. This seems to give credit to news coming from Rome according to which an archivist attached to the Vatican bought some documents relating to Turkish history in Bulgaria. It is thought that they may be the missing documents."

Spain has recently held its annual Book Week in Madrid and the principal towns, and during its seven days the bookshops everywhere reduced all prices ten per cent.

Manuel Galvez, one of the leading Argentine authors, whose works have been translated into various languages, is mentioned as one of the possible candidates for the Nobel Prize for Literature in the event of this prize being awarded to a South American writer. Sr. Galvez, who is the president of the local P. E. N. centre, is not only a well-known novelist, the author of several important works of a historical character and certain very stirring studies of Buenos Aires life, but has also done a great deal to further an interest in books among the Argentine public.

In a review in a recent number of the *Saturday Review* of the "Autobiography of Frank Lloyd Wright," published by Longmans, Green & Co., the price was erroneously given as $5 instead of $6.

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Points of View

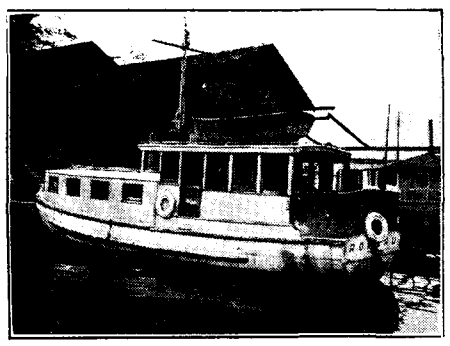
Parnassus on Keels

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

I wonder if Mr. Morley would mind my stealing his Parnassus on Wheels idea for a book boat which would visit the whaling ports and settlements of the North Pacific Coast?

There are a thousand miles of magnificent and lonely waters from Admiralty Inlet northwestward to Alaska—and not a book store. The boat is a forty-footer, built for offshore work, which another newspaperman and myself plan to convert into a floating library. Here is her photo. She is being repainted and rechristened.

At the present moment I am teaching some vague smattering of navigation to my partner, so he can make the first experimental trip alone. After that, I hope to install my family aboard and embark upon a genteel though seafaring pilgrim-



PARNASSUS ON KEELS.

age to the Queen Charlotte Islands. There is a town there you would like: an anchorage under the hill, and the cottages of a whaling village straggling along the beach and up another hill where a white chapel with an exaggerated steeple stands out against the dark fir trees and the sky. It is so quiet in the harbor that you can hear the surf at the foot of the cliffs outside.

If you would know what those waters are, stop the next time you pass a store where navigators' supplies are sold and look at the North Pacific charts. Or better yet, ask to see the maps published by the Dominion Government. They have such notations as this, in small type:

"Wild swans seen in outlying places."
And: "Sea otters offshore. (VERY RARE)"

The people of the coast are grand, too—there is an old Englishman whose name is almost fabulous in this day of gasoline and government by the people, who for forty years has lived in a house on the beach which is half filled with whiskey and half with books. And there is a tribe of Indians to the northward whose tribal totem pole is surmounted by a stiff, frock-coated wooden figure with carved Dundreary whiskers of a bright orange hue: the reverend Scot who is patron of the tribe and mutual ancestor of most of its present members. A most pious and fecund dominie, by all accounts, from Inverness.

Enough of that. It would be rank plagiarism if I went bookselling among the honest fishermen and farmers without Mr. Morley's leave, since he had the idea first.

RANSOM FOSTER.

860 Stuart Building,
Seattle, Washington.

Education and Reading

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

With all the reports, comments, analyses, apologias, and azure hued speculations (anent more and better education for more and better book buying) now showing such fruitful activity, I feel that all the self-appointed reader-critic-publisher committees are accomplishing about as much as most committees accomplish.

In Henry Noble MacCracken's review of Albert Jay Nock's "Theory of Education in the United States," published some time ago in your journal, which I read with interest, and in Bernard Iddings Bell's comment thereon in a later issue, which I read with even greater interest, I see a direct bearing upon this evasive problem of how to stimulate more and better book buying.

President MacCracken does not agree with Professors Nock and Bell, and they do not agree with him. President MacCracken thinks our collegiate strata and collegiate instruction superior to European. Let us give those sentiments a *requiem æternam* and turn, for variation, to Dr. Larned's Carnegie report. Perhaps we can split a few hairs and arrive at a median. At all events, Mr. Bell admits that Mr. MacCracken admits that "we give training to second-rate people astonishingly well."

While the colleges are taking advantage of the depression to cut down their faculties of instruction, the poor "second-raters," unable to find other work, pour into the colleges. This year we are greeted with the spectacle (or débâcle) of seeing 600,000 young men and women getting more and better collegiate credits: certainly a greater number of students in our colleges than ever before. How many have already "graduated" I do not know, and care less—but it is evident that the colleges must be doing something to them, when only a scant 100,000 people make up the major layer of our book-buying strata. Maybe the rest have been taught in college how to discriminate in a salutary way. Maybe that is why most of the book buyers who answered your recent questionnaire find their appetites "unwhetted" by publishers' publicity; why most of them find such publicity dishonest or full of overstatements. And maybe that is why publishers, dumbly unaware that "the man on the street" does *not* buy books, continue to publish and advertise only for "the man on the street"!

Your questionnaire omitted two things: masculine-feminine percentages, and college trained percentages. The latter problem I have touched upon in the above paragraph. As for the former, if a depression affects book buying because a majority of our book buyers are women, then, during a depression, we must stop publishing "by and for women." It stands to reason that practical womanhood is more concerned with her family budget than with her intellectual and emotional outlets through reading. When it is a question of books or bologna, books go.

That leads to another question. Why is it commonly agreed upon that women constitute the major reading element of our population? Partly because more women write—obvious reason, with no escape until we change our social order. Partly because a heavy percentage of publishing is determined upon by astute publishers, aided and seconded by all their numerous "yes-women," whose tastes really guide the clumsy males more than they would readily care to admit. Why does this condition exist? Partly because women, depending upon "instinctive" appreciation for books, are often very positive about what is appropriate for publication and for publicity, and what is not. Partly because women make better "yes-men" or commit other breaches of the ancient and honorable etiquette of publishing. Partly because they make better "organization-men"; and this is mostly because they smile sweetly and work for less money! One thing that the publishing world really needs, and needs badly, is a higher percentage of educated, masculine brains. Then we shall have just as many women readers and more men readers.

But the difficulty is that you "can't revolutionize the publishing business." No, I fear not. It is too heavily weighed down by the weight of centuries: something like the man with the hoe! It will probably continue to "muddle through," depending upon feminine instinct, bad cocktails, and much Macedonian tobacco smoke for its hunches, its intuitions, its knowledge of which authors will "take" and which ones "won't take," and for its infernal opinions of what the "man on the street" would like to read about next. It is heresy to suggest this, but I am sure that I prefer the business judgment of college trained public library assistants to the judgment of seventy-five per cent of the presidents of publishing houses whom it has been my privilege to have had indigent discourse with. And as for editors—I mean the ones who really do the editing—my sympathy and tolerance!

At what conclusion have I arrived? To put it briefly: our colleges, our reading public, our magazines, our publishers, our intelligentsia, our culture (if we have any) are getting what they deserve: no more and no less. Give to ignorance its due, and stop kicking.

And now, at long last, for the part played by the critical reviews. Granted that public-spirited and well meaning publishers occasionally publish books that are outstandingly good. What recognition, barring personal pull, do they get from editors, publishers, and critics? The whole history of Anglo-American literary lives, as well as of Anglo-American literary reviews, proves that true contemporary recognition and real discrimination are always wanting. In France, Germany, and Russia, there have always been media whereby one could occasionally discover a worthwhile new author or a worthwhile book. In America I know of none. In Eastern Europe, Orenburgsky's "Land of the Fathers" could sell a quarter-million; here, after twenty-seven years, it is lucky to be still in print. In 1928 his "Land of the Children" came out, and if we exclude the former editor of the *Golden Book*, it was not even "acceptable" to our major critics. By this time one ought to be able to pick up a first edition for fifty cents. "Tristram" did sell around 60,000, fortunately, but what did Macmillan do with the "Selected Poems of Carl Spitteler"? To-day, if I want to buy a copy of the "Olympian Spring," I can, after more than a quarter-century, send to Germany. Scribners have just published "Prometheus and Epimetheus," I see. Who will publish "Prometheus der Dulder," "Früehesten Erlebnisse," "Schmetterlinge," and "Olympian Spring"? If "Tristram" could sell 60,000, "Olympian Spring" should sell 100,000. A reading of the violet gathering, from Book V, might lead more than one poor soul into the study of German. In 1928 the Oxford Press gave us two volumes on Ivan Pavlov's theory of conditioned reflexes, but who cared? Last fall Dutton published a translation of Eugen Georg's "Adventure of Mankind." Aside from my own review in "The Commonweal" I haven't seen it mentioned. Our pseudo-intellectual nobility prides itself on having read Wingfield-Stratford on English civilization (fair enough), but how many of them have read Kircher, Williamson, or Cohen-Portheim? It raves noticeably about "The Time of Man" and "The Great Meadow," but "Jingling in the "Wind" passed overhead. University presses publish the essays of Grandgent and Schelling, but I doubt that college courses have paid any attention to them, or to those of Cabell, Spitteler, and "Aguecheek." The later novels of W. L. George may have staggered through one edition apiece in the United States, while McBride has to publish Cabell's later works at a premium. I could continue almost indefinitely.

If our colleges are doing what President MacCracken and other optimistic believers in the best of all education say they are doing, then there must be at least a quarter-million "diploma holders" with classical A. B's. capable of reading and actually of appreciating good books. But how are they going to find out what they are and where they are, when our gracious, and refined, and literary, and overly educated women editors—who, after all, control most of our "literary" reviews—insist upon "news," "urbanity," and "authority," rather than upon brains, and smile sweetly as they relegate works of genius to the ranks of the unpublished and unmentioned reviews?

In her arms she carries good books away,
As far as she goes,
And hides them where nobody ever shall say,
For nobody knows.

What we need are more men like Romain Rolland, who might tell us about some adequate books worth spending money for.

LLOYD WENDELL ESHLEMAN.

Peekskill, N. Y.

On Booksellers

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

In your columns for April 30 appeared a poem "On Booksellers," contributed by Mr. David Landow from a seventeenth century book now on my shelves. Mr. Landow stated that he was ignorant of the author; an omission which I hasten to fill. The author was L. Menton (*vide* "Anonoyma & Pseudonyma," Vol. III, 2078). The last record of a sale of a copy is 1902. Had I known that Mr. Landow was copying this publication, I would have been pleased to supply him with the same information.

One has but to scratch the surface of bibliography to be distressed at the methods of booksellers. Edmund Curll, on whom Mr. Strauss has written at length, is but one of many; and much more may be added to the existing accounts of that knavish bookseller. Henry Hills, in Blackfriars, was a choice pirate. To him, Ambrose Philips brought his "Pastorals" in 1710; and this is the one and only legitimate publication issued by Hills in the course of a long and successful career. The remainder of his publications were either spurious or piracies. But this subject could be treated at greater length that your columns could afford.

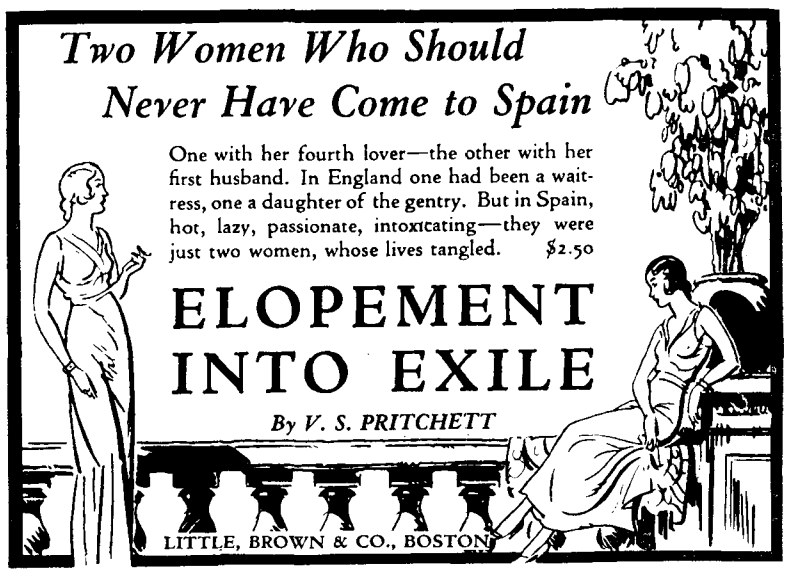
It should be further pointed out that bookseller did not formerly mean quite what it does now. A bookseller was primarily a publisher. And moreover, such was the jealousy existing between rival booksellers, that there was little coöperation between them. It is rare to find a book of the seventeenth century that could be obtained from more than at the most three booksellers in London; provincial bookselling was almost non-existent and forms an interesting but quite separate chapter of the trade, being chiefly confined to chap books and theology. It is not until well on in the eighteenth century that one finds the co-operation of such firms as Rivington, Lackington, Longman, and other bigger booksellers of that ilk working hand in hand for a proper distribution of the printed word.

On the continent the situation was much the same. In the fifteenth and sixteenth century ,every town of any importance had its own bookseller-publisher, who printed, chiefly by piracy, editions of the more popular of the classics and a great mass of today unreadable theology. Hence the astounding number of editions of the same author that were printed in the infancy of the press.

Be it said for our much maligned trade that it has always had its great and honored members; Aldus and Stephanus were scholars of no mean ability. Elzevir was one of the greatest educating factors of the seventeenth century. In England, of course, one at once thinks of Caxton in this same respect. But of the later men, Moseley was a patron of the arts; Tonson a member of the Kit Cat Club and a friend of the intelligentsia; Dodsley, an author and a man of parts; though he began as a footman, he was esteemed by the greatest literary men of his day. These men—strange as it may seem to those who have read the wholesale condemnations that now are broadcast—these men have their modern counterparts. Yes, even today.

C. A. STONEHILL, JR.

New Haven, Conn.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By V. S. PRITCHETT
LITTLE, BROWN & CO., BOSTON

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The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received.

Belles Letters

AN ESTIMATE OF WILLIAM WORDSWORTH. By *Elsie Smith*. Oxford, Eng.: Blackwell.

VARIETY OF WAYS. By *Bonamy Dobree*. Oxford University Press. $1.75.

DARWIN AMONG THE POETS. By *Lionel Stevenson*. University of Chicago Press. $3.

MOODS AND TRUTHS. By *Fulton J. Sheen*. Century. $2.

A FITZGERALD FRIENDSHIP. By *Neilson Campbell Hannay*. Rudge

THE INFLUENCE OF THE LATIN ELEGISTS ON ENGLISH LYRIC POETRY. By *Pauline Aiken*. Oro, Me.: University Press. $1.

HENRY JAMES: LES ANNÉES DRAMATIQUES. Paris: Jauve.

THE PREFACES OF HENRY JAMES. By *Leon Edel*. Paris: Jauve.

NOTES SUR L'AFGHANISTAN. By *Maurice Fouchet*. Paris: Fèrres.

ESSAYS AND STUDIES IN ENGLISH AND COMPARATIVE LITERATURE. By *Members of the English Department of the University of Michigan*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan.

GERMAN ROMANTICISM. By *Oskar Walzel*. Putnam. $3.50.

THE WORLD'S BEST ESSAYS. Edited by *F. H. Pritchard*. Boni.

THE ANATOMY OF DON QUIXOTE. Edited by *M. J. Benardete* and *Angel Flores*. Ithaca: Dragon Press. $1.50.

A CHEERFUL ASCETIC AND OTHER ESSAYS. By *Rev. James J. Daly*. New York: Bruce.

SPENSER AND THE TABLE ROUND. By *Charles Bowie Millican*. Harvard University Press. $2.50.

POE AND CHIVERS. By *Landon C. Bell*. Columbus, O.: Trowbridge.

Biography

SELMA LAGERLÖF. By *Walter A. Berendsohn*. Doubleday, Doran. $2.50.

LIFE OF BLACK HAWK. *Iowa State Historical Society*.

PORTRAIT OF AN AIRMAN. By *Philip Arnall*. Covici-Friede. $2.50.

INCREDIBLE PIZARRO. By *Frank Hay*. Mohawk Press. $3.50 net.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN. Modern Library. 95 cents.

UNDERWORLD. By *Trevor Allen*. $2.50 net.

ARTHUR C. A. HALL. By *George L. Richardson*. Houghton Mifflin. $3.

WASHINGTON. Edited by *William Buckner McGroarty*. Richmond: Garrett & Massie. $5.

HERBERT CLARK HOOVER. By *Clement Wood*. New York: Michael Swain. $2.

Fiction

GIRL INTO WOMAN. By SOPHIE KERR. Farrar & Rinehart. 1932. $2.

This book will reward its readers on one very definite condition—that too much is not expected of it. We have had a number of deeply studied novels of the startling transition of women from the Victorian ways of life to modern independence of thought and action, and the jacket notices of "Girl Into Woman" are perhaps unfortunate in suggesting that here is another seriously realistic book of this type. So much cannot be claimed for it, for several reasons. To instance one, the father of the heroine who in this story is revolting against home tyranny is such an exaggerated figure of a narrow-minded bully—first tyrannical and later heartless—that he can serve no purpose except one of caricature; certainly not one of reasoned generalization. In other words, a serious presentation of a problem cannot be felt. Nor, in spite of her romantic dreams, is one moved to a belief in the amazingly quick flight of the daughter. Submission was still so habitual at the close of the last century that, except rarely, the depths were not easily stirred. Also, the youth who fascinates Cora and brings about her revolt is, like the father, drawn on broad lines—in this case a most unappealing picture of frank vulgarity. Rebellion at a father's unwarranted punishment might easily have driven his daughter into an escapade with this obviously coarse young mechanic, but never into the sordid marriage which here rapidly ensues. The reader, with all good will, feels his trust betrayed. Cora elopes with such a man because the novelist wishes her to, not because the slowly moving current of what was indeed about to be a changing age has reached and overturned her being.

Granting this much as accomplished, however, the level of the book rises at once, and the second section is extremely well done. Mrs. Kerr draws a sadly genuine picture of the Ridley family in its squalid tenement surroundings—quarrelling, carping, spying; and of the gently bred girl drooping in its midst, cowed and stunned by what her ignorance and hasty folly have inflicted on her. Flight again, after a long year, is Cora's solution, and this time we believe in her, for the brutal horrors of her life have galvanized her into reasoned action. What follows forms a third section of the book, again well done. Through a quiet realism, though on no deep level of emotional study, we follow the life of a New York boarding house, into which chance has brought Cora and her baby, and where her natural ability allows her to embrace the opportunity that soon opens of sharing in its management. For the sake of safety, friendly surroundings, and self-support she is able to endure a daily round of heavy work, her fears of discovery concealed behind an assumed name. The kindly help of a lawyer among the boarders leads her at last to the freedom of a divorce, and soon of course to a new affection. This ending, however, as also the reconciliation with her parents, is no more than must be allowed to this or any storyteller. It is indeed on such a basis that we must read Mrs. Kerr's book. In spots only is it a picture of an age. It is, however, in good faith, a well-written story.

LAUGH AND LIE DOWN. By ROBERT CANTWELL. Farrar & Rinehart. 1931. $2.

In this novel of life in a middle-sized Washington town, Robert Cantwell shows with a good deal of vigor how the aberrant qualities of our day are affecting the young who do not live in New York or the Middle West. We have been told over and over what the dry rot of the day is doing to the latter and what a wetter rot does to the former, but in "Laugh and Lie Down" communication is established with new territory where the same things are a little different and come with news value.

Mr. Cantwell finds his youth drinking to forget its ineffectualness, unable to accept old standards and impotent to create new, frantic to hurry away from wherever it is but blind as to any destination. This sounds like the old story, but it is not—quite. For these men and girls are products of their environment as well as of their time. The Pacific Coast is in them as well as the nineteen thirties. They have a curious practical streak which sears the edges of their recklessness, and even the things which they can imagine are restricted by the local bonds which they have so energetically cast off. This frustrate group is as futile as the ones of which we have already been told so much, but they are placed in a new solution, and the resulting tropisms are interesting to watch.

Mr. Cantwell writes an unusual and distinguished prose which very seldom fails of its effect. His manner of telling his story is individual also and will find little favor with the hurrying reader who wants to know what it is all about and be done with it. To others, more interested in experiments, in personal angles of approach, it will seem refreshing. In characterization Mr. Cantwell secures only very blurred outlines so that his people run into each other, as it were, and leave little definite impression as to personality. This is probably somewhat intentional, since a lack of individuality is part of the disease from which they suffer, but it comes also from an inability to get them down on paper as completely as they were apparently conceived.

CHILDREN OF PLEASURE. By LARRY BARRETTO. Farrar & Rinehart. 1932. $2.

Graham Gault only made half a million a year in his brokerage business, but when the crash came it didn't take him long to lose it. One by one the luxuries Linda Gault was accustomed to went by the board, the roses, the servants, the car, the house. Graham kept himself going with alcohol; Linda had long given up hope of a satisfactory marriage with so weak a man. She was pampered, spoiled, self-centered—she was a thorough complex of everything that can be wrong with a woman. In Bermuda, where he sent her with five thousand dollars to wait "till things get better," she met and fell in love with Ronald Sanderson, English, handsome, straightforward. Things got worse. Graham was completely wiped out. Linda decided to marry Ronald and returned to get her divorce.

Back in New York she was finally forced to face a few of the realities of life and, obtaining employment in a couturière's shop, she lived apart from her husband. But Graham's resources were not entirely gone—he got drunk one night and brought a package of letters to the financier John Fair. They were Fair's letters to Linda, and he borrowed twenty-five thousand dollars on the strength of ithem. Then he made a killing in the market. Linda returned to him.

Like the popular novelist he is, Mr. Barretto has woven cross-plots, schemes, intrigues, robbery, and romance into this bare outline. All loose strings are tied up, everything is hunky-dory in the end. A dyed-in-the-wool piece of machine-made fiction, "Children of Pleasure" will soon reach its intended audience, between its covers and from the screen.

THE CAPTAIN'S TABLE. A Transatlantic Log. By SISLEY HUDDLESTON. Lippincott. 1932. $2.50.

Mr. Huddleston has written largely of European continental life, with a preference for Bohemian doings. Here, he recounts his experiences on board the good ship or vessel called the *Manchia* on a voyage from the Port of New York towards Cherbourg and Southampton. At the Captain's table he meets a group of notable people, and their reactions to shipboard life is the theme of his book. We have the lonely millionaire and his ubiquitous secretary, the Film Personality with her attendant Marquis, the inevitable scientist, the playwright, the "society" lady and her cause, the cynical lawyer, the ebullient playboy, the vivacious "Colo," a Russian Grand Duke, with a Bishop for benison. But it is clear that the author was hardly in the right mood to employ his characters seriously. He has them all grouped on the stage, and one has expectations of incident, but, for some reason or other, the author holds them all in purdah. He develops the point that he was made the confidant of their fears and feelings, and the reader is left with the impression that he was an ideal confidant.

This is not to say that Mr. Huddleston does not write well of his experiences as a transatlantic passenger. On the contrary, he conveys all the sense of excommunication with the land that is engendered by a sea voyage.

OLD WINE AND NEW. By WARWICK DEEPING. Knopf. 1932. $2.50.

This book is as good as anything Mr. Deeping has ever written. And though his amazingly skilful technique is not very responsive to analysis, the real secret of his success is perhaps easier to come at. For if you examine this novel, you will find neither reason in it nor yet romance, but something which does duty for both, and is more treacherous and more appealing than either . . . a lethal tenderness and pity, a yearning for that new Jerusalem where the strongest go to the wall and only the unfittest survive.

Spencer Scarsdale is created according to the now well-known heroic formula: he is middle-aged and slightly helpless, takes it hard on the chin for the better part of the book—behaves like a gentleman and a knight-errant in spite of all—and is suitably rewarded before the story ends. This time he becomes a best-selling novelist, but is never permitted to lose his endearing childlike qualities—without which, indeed, he would never have got anywhere at all. For Mr. Deeping is a sincere and constant professor of what our emotions would sometimes have us call a philosophy of pity; and Mr. Deeping's Fate, however badly she may behave at first, in the end reserves her choicest favors for the innocent, the ineffectual, and the idiotic.

STORM. By PETER NEAGOE. Paris: New Review Publications. 1932. 90 cents.

Readers of *transition* are familiar with Mr. Neagoe's stories which, due to purely fortuitous circumstances, constitute a *genre* of their own. English is not the author's mother tongue, and no doubt some of his shortcomings may be ascribed to the difficulties he has encountered in mastering a foreign language, for many of his stories unfortunately read like translations.

But his most serious stumbling-block, as evidenced by the ten stories here collected, is the lack of a sense of form. With the exception of two of them—"The Village Saint" and "Shepherd of the Lord"—his whole work displays a decided lack of coherence in concept and execution. Of the two stories cited, the first is a well-wrought and amusing sketch; the second offers evidence of a talent capable of better work.

Generally speaking, Mr. Neagoe is most successful in his stories of Transylvanian peasant life. Thinking purely in terms of his characters, he offers them frankly as they are. He does not attempt an intellectual exposition of them, he has taste enough to avoid the cheaply symbolic. At their best they are colorful, naturalistic, and generally moving. Very little actual narrative is involved, the tales being either episodic in treatment or proceeding from a generalized mood to a more specific.

His least successful work is represented here by such pieces as "A Fact," "They," and "Dreams," all of which represent a rather specious playing with exceptionally trite ideology.

BABYLON ON HUDSON. ANONYMOUS. Harper's. 1932. $2.50.

This is a novel which is apparently intended to convey a revelation of the life

(*Continued on page 738*)

Memoirs of Prince VON BÜLOW

VOL. III

The World War and Germany's Collapse 1909-1919

THE third, and probably the most interesting, volume of these supremely important Memoirs. Starting after his dismissal in 1909 Bülow describes the gathering of the thunderheads of war that crashed in 1914. He analyzes the Kaiser's blunders and concludes that stupidity, not malevolence, lay behind them. Bülow depicts the days of the War, the collapse and the revolution; and concludes with a brilliant discussion of Germany's future. *16 Illustrations. Uniform with Volumes I and II.* $5.00

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Gleanings from the Journal of Arnold Bennett

The following entries from the diary which Arnold Bennett kept from 1896-1910 are to be included in "The Journal of Arnold Bennett" which the Viking Press is to issue on May 27.

THE novelist of contemporary manners needs to be saturated with a sense of the picturesque in modern things. Walking down Edith Grove this afternoon, I observed the vague, mysterious beauty of the vista of houses and bare trees melting imperceptibly into a distance of grey fog. And then, in King's Road, the figures of tradesmen at shop doors, of children romping or stealing along mournfully, of men and women each totally different from every other, and all serious, wrapt up in their own thoughts and ends—these seemed curiously strange and novel and wonderful. Eevery scene, even the commonest, is wonderful, if only one can detach oneself, casting off all memory of use and custom, and behold it (as it were) for the first time; in its right, authentic colors; without making comparisons. The novelist should cherish and burnish this faculty of seeing crudely, simply, artlessly, ignorantly; of seeing like a baby or a lunatic, who lives each moment by itself and tarnishes the present by no remembrance of the past.

Reading George Moore's "Mike Fletcher" I felt inclined to give up my new project of taking a house, and instead to take rooms in Gray's Inn or the Temple, and cultivate carefully the art of being a bachelor in comfort . . . to dine regularly at the same secluded, excellent restaurant, to know the byways of town life, to accomplish slowly the right and rare furnishing of one's rooms, to be utterly independent. . . . The sound of these words is attractive ,and such employments might give content till one was forty-five, say; but afterwards?

There can be no knowledge without emotion. We may be aware of a truth, yet until we have felt its force, it is not ours. To the cognition of the brain must be added the experience of the soul. Because her instinct has told her, or because she has been reliably informed, the faded virgin knows that the supreme joys are not for her; she knows, by a process of the intellect; but she can feel her deprivation no more than the young mother can feel the hardship of the virgin's lot. Of all the inhabitants of the Inferno, none but Lucifer knows that hell is hell, and the secret function of purgatory is to make of heaven an effective reality.

But to the artist is sometimes granted a sudden, transient insight which serves in this matter for experience. A flash, and where previously the brain held a dead fact, the soul grasps a living truth! At moments we are all artists.

During the period of unproductiveness which has followed the completion of my book on journalism for women, I have been thinking about a history of the English novel in the nineteenth century. I believe in the course of a few years I could write such a history as would cast a new light on English fiction considered strictly from the craftsman's standpoint. As regards fiction, it seems to me that only within the last few years have we absorbed from France that passion for the artistic shapely presentation of truth, and that feeling for words as words, which animated Flaubert, the de Goncourts, and de Maupassant, and which is so exactly described and defined in de Maupassant's introduction to the collected works of Flaubert. None of the (so-called) great masters of English nineteenth-century fiction, had (if I am right) a deep artistic interest in form and treatment; they were absorbed in "subject"—just as the "anecdote"—painters of the Royal Academy are absorbed in subject, and in my view they are open to the same reproach as these. Certainly they had not the feeling for words to any large degree, though one sees traces of it sometimes in the Brontës, —never in George Eliot, or Jane Austen, or Dickens, or even Thackeray or Scott.

Yet that this feeling for words existed independently in England is proved by the prose of Charles Lamb and John Ruskin. The novelists cared little for form, the *science* of construction,—*Composition*. They had not artistic taste; they lacked this just as Millais lacked it. Millais may have been a great painter; these novelists may have been great writers, but neither (to use de Maupassant's distinction) were great artists in the sense in which I understand the word. An artist must be interested primarily in presentment, not in the thing presented. He must have a passion for technique, a deep love for form. . . . And so on.

In accordance with an urgent message from Lane, I called this morning to see him about my second book, "Journalism for Women: a Practical Guide." He was unwell and in bed, and the interview passed in his bedroom. He beamed on me, made attentive inquiries about my affairs, and sent for cigarettes. Then he showed me the glowing report made by Miss Evelyn Sharpe upon my book, and said that he wanted to publish it at once—within three weeks. He offered me a 10 per cent. royalty; I suggested 15 per cent., and he agreed at once. Title, shape, type, paper, and price were settled there and then and Chapman received instructions to draw the contracts. In another five minutes the contracts were signed and exchanged, and the manuscript was made up to go to the printers that morning—within the hour.

How different the reception of this book from the frigid welcome given to "A Man from the North"! The latter, a serious and laborious work, has waited, after acceptance, nearly two years for publication. "Journalism for Women" thrown off in about eight weeks, is to be printed and published in less than a month.

Phillpotts to-day told me that my paragraph criticism of his "Lying Prophets" had given him more pleasure than any other criticism upon the book; and was in fact, the best he had had. He urged me to write exhaustive critical articles upon some of the classics. I said I wanted to deal thoroughly with Turgeniev, and he approved.

Lunch with Eden Philpotts, H. D. Lowry, Bayly and another. The conversation came round to author's receipts. Phillpotts said that he, one of the original band of contributors, was suing the *Idler* for (I think) twelve guineas, and that he had recently lost fifteen guineas due from the *Minister Magazine*. The fifth man told how G. A. Sala had got him to work for six months without paying a penny.

Referring to defaulting journals, I told them that I had only lost money once. For years the *Star* has owed me 3/16 for a paragraph, which I have never been able to obtain.

Phillpotts, who has just finished a novel, "The Children of the Mist," told me that his publisher was moaning about the length of it—180,000 words. He said that he had cut a lot out of the typewritten copy, and should probably cut more from the slip proofs. He appeared to see nothing extraordinary in this. To me it was very extraordinary. Having finished a novel I could not cut it down, because I should have satisfied myself that it contained nothing inessential. Phillpotts admitted that he was uncertain whether some parts of the book were not redundant. If I cut out I should be obliged to rewrite. The notion that anything can be taken from a finished work of art without leaving a gap seems to me monstrous.

While reading George Moore's new novel "Evelyn Innes," I was struck by the magnificence of the career of a *prima donna* as a theme for fiction. In Moore's book the vocal side of the *prima donna*, her triumphs etc. ,is scarely more than incidental. I would make it central. There is nothing more marvellous, more all-compelling, more inscrutable in the world than a great soprano voice. And the emotions of the prima donna in the hour when she dominates her audience must be unique. Probably I shall never be able to write such a novel—from lack of material. But if I could wander about Covent Garden stage during a season, and could have a few afternoon teas with a prima donna, I would attempt the book. The old age of the *prima donna* and her death might make a superbly cruel contrast to the rest of the story—astringent, chilling, unbearably hopeless, and bitter with reminiscence.

It is so long since I wrote anything here that I have forgotten the circumstances under which I abandoned this book for a while. But no doubt the habit of writing in it—always irksome to some extent—was interfered with by some temporary pressure of work, and then the summer and the heat and the holiday feeling conspired against its resumption.

In the meantime, partly owing to the influence of Phillpotts, I have decided very seriously to take up fiction for a livelihood. A certain chronic poverty had forced upon me the fact that I was giving no attention to money-making, beyond my editorship, and so the resolution came about. Till the end of 1899 I propose to give myself absolutely to writing the sort of fiction that sells itself. My serious novel "Anna Tellwright" with which I had made some progress is put aside indefinitely—or rather until I have seen what I can do. To write popular fiction is offensive to me, but it is far more agreeable than being tied daily to an office and editing a lady's paper; and perhaps it is less ignoble, and less of a strain on the conscience. To edit a lady's paper, even a relatively advanced one, is to foster conventionality and hinder progress regularly once a week. Moreover I think that fiction will pay better, and in order to be happy I must have a fair supply of money.

Also I have decided very seriously to aim at living in the country, to the entire abandonment of London. A year ago I could not have contemplated the idea of leaving London, but I have developed since then.

In an article of mine on d'Annunzio in last week's *Academy*, there is a passage which seems to me, now, such beautiful English that I can't help repeating it over and over, in my mind. Perhaps in ten years' time I may come to despise it in favor of a more severe, ascetic style. Here it is:

"These are creatures, sad with the melancholy of a race about to decay, radiant with the final splendor which precedes dissolution, wistful by reason of a destiny never to be satisfied, who move through the drama with a feminine perfection of bodily and spiritual elegance seldom equalled and certainly never surpassed in any previous prose fiction."

This year I have written 335,340 words, grand total. 228 articles and stories (including 4 instalments of a serial of 30,000 —7,500 words each) have actually been published.

Also my book of plays—"Polite Farces."

I have written six or eight short stories not yet published or sold.

Also the greater part of a 55,000 word serial—"Love and Life"—for Tillotsons, which begins publication about April next year.

Also the whole draft (80,000 words) of my Staffordshire novel "Anna Tellwright."

My total earnings were £592 3*s*. 1*d*., of which sum I have yet to receive £72 10*s*.

I resumed work last Saturday, after the longest holiday I have had since I can remember. Except a few hours' work on a play, I had done no work for over two months. On Saturday, Sunday, and yesterday I wrote a story called *The Murder of the Mandarin*, and I posted it at once to the typist. In the evening I rode over to Marlotte and dined alone with Mrs. Devereux.

Mrs. —— told me about Frank Harris. She said he was forty-three when she first met him in 1895. He then had a fixed idea that he should die at forty-four. She said no man had ever influenced her so much, though there was no question either of love or even affection between them. All London believed he was her lover, and all London had ample cause for believing so; but as a fact he was not in the list of her lovers. He did what he liked with her. Over and over again she had waited hours for him. He had a marvellous voice. Lamperte offered him five years' tuition if he would only study, free, and said he would be the greatest bass that ever had been. His eloquence was astounding. He made a political speech, and was adopted as Conservative candidate for one of the Ridings. No dinner party was complete without him. Carlyle had thought very highly of him, and this opinion was echoed by a later generation. Lord R. Churchill thought him the greatest man he had ever met. John Walter of the *Times* believed in him long after most others had ceased to do so.

He bought the *Saturday Review* for £5,000 and sold it for £30,000. He had no moral sense. He treated everybody shamefully. But he was never mean. He was the sort of man who would stab a person in the back and rob him of all he possessed, and then give the entire proceeds to another person. He was easily influenced, and easily intoxicated by his own eloquence.

Today I seemed to get a little nearer the state of mind and the mode of life that I have aimed at. I finished the story "The Glimpse" for the Christmas number of *Black and White* (much too good, too spiritual). It gave me a headache. In the afternoon I continued reading Lewes's "History of Philosophy," which I have undertaken in all its bigness.

While reading it I was seized again with the idea of learning Latin decently; it was so strong that I could scarcely keep my attention on the book. Another example of the undiscipline of the brain.

Yet I have gradually got my brain far better under control than most people. Always haunted by dissatisfaction at the discrepancy between reason and conduct! No reason why conduct should not conform to the ideas of reason, except inefficient control of the brain. This that I am always preaching, and with a success of popular interest too, I cannot perfectly practice. It is the clumsiness of my living that disgusts me. The rought carpentry instead of fine cabinetry. The unnecessary friction. The constant slight inattention to my own rules. I could be a marvel to others and to myself if only I practised more sincerely. Half an hour in the morning in complete concentration on the living-through of the day, and I should work wonders! But this all-important concentration is continually interrupted —interruptions which weaken it; sometimes deliberately abandoned for concentration on matters of admittedly inferior importance! Strange! One can only stick to it.

It is humiliating that I cannot get through one single day without wounding or lightly abrading the sensibility of others, without wasting time and brain-power on thought that I do not desire to think, without yielding to appetites that I despise! I am so wrapped up in myself that I, if anyone, ought to succeed in a relative self-perfection. I aim at it as much from love of perfection and scorn of inefficiency as for my own happiness. I honestly think I care quite as much for other people's happiness as for my own; and that is not saying much for my love of my own happiness. Love of justice, more than outraged sensibility at the spectacle of suffering and cruelty, prompts me to support social reforms. I can and do look at suffering with scientific (artistic) coldness. I do not care. I am above it. But I want to hasten justice, for its own sake. I think this is fairly sincere; perhaps not quite. I don't think I scorn people; I have none of that scorn of inferior (*i.e.*, of the vast majority of) people which is seen in many great men. I think my view is greater than theirs. Clumsiness in living is what I scorn: systems, not people. And even systems I can excuse and justify to myself. No, my leading sentiment is my own real superiority, not the inferiority of others. It depends on how you look at it.

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The Reader's Guide

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the choice of books should be addressed to MRS. BECKER, c/o *The Saturday Review*. As for reasons of space ninety percent of the inquiries received cannot be answered in print, a stamped and addressed envelope should be enclosed for reply.

L. *B. Westboro, Mass., asks for books about the theatre in the period of the American Revolution, and whether the play of William Dunlap or General Burgoyne are now available.* Arthur Hobson Quinn's "History of the American Drama" (Harper) goes from colonial times to the Civil War, and the chapters on the early American stage are especially interesting. Montrose Moses's "The American Dramatist" (Little, Brown) also covers the colonial and revolutionary periods, reaching the present. Arthur Hornblow's "History of the Theatre in America" (Lippincott) also gives attention to the Revolutionary stage and its dramatists.

William Dunlap's "André," given at the Park Theatre, N. Y., March 30, 1798, is in the first volume of "Representative Plays by American Dramatists" (Dutton), which preserves several other plays of the period, notably Mercy Warren's "The Group." She fought vigorously against Burgoyne on the stage, and her farce is a slashing piece of satire, but I do not know of a modern reprint of Burgoyne's "The Blockade," the most successful of the entertainments by which, and by turning Faneuil Hall into a playhouse, he so shocked Boston. But there is a good deal about it, and him, in the charming biography "Gentleman Johnny Burgoyne," by F. J. Huddleston (Bobbs-Merrill). In this I find that his "Dramatic and Poetic Works" were published in 1810 in two volumes octavo. Mr. Huddleston, the librarian of the British War Office—and incidentally Sylvia Townsend Walker's uncle—wrote this and "Warriors in Undress" with an irresistible sparkle seldom to be found in military biography. Do not forget Royall Tyler, whose "The Contrast" is in A. H. Quinn's "Representative American Plays" (Century), a fine collection. This and "André" were both published by the Dunlap Society, and Tyler's plays have been several times presented in recent years.

C. *K. A., Los Angeles, Cal.*, says that the "Gee Betsy ain't it fierce, there ain't no flag" story came to him orally some years ago as from Jane Addams at Hull House, where a class of small children were set at writing a play. *The Midwest Meteor Association, University of Iowa*, is looking for a novel an important part of whose plot depended on the killing of a ship's steersman by the fall of a meteorite. They are the more interested in finding it because they believe it to be the only novel in which a meteor figures, and they think this one may be "An Ocean Tragedy," by Clark Russell (1884-1911) or at least some novel by this once-popular author. I thought it might be Clark Russell's "Atlantic Tragedy," but that introduces nothing more unusual than a ship collision. Curiously enough, when you think of the effect of comets on Mr. Wells, meteors do seem to have been neglected by novelists. They get into art—there is a fireball in Raphael's Madonna da Foligno—but not into any fiction I have seen: I thought there might be one at least in John Jacob Astor's "Journey in Other Worlds," but that is concerned with straightening the axis of the earth. There was once a novel by James Corran, "Daybreak," published in New York in 1896, in which the moon loses its grip, is drawn into our atmosphere, and in the one burst of imagination in this otherwise pretty awful tale, "scraped across the continent of South America, received the death-blow in collision with the Andes, careened, and fell at last into the South Pacific Ocean." There it bulged out of the water enough to make it possible to picnic on it. The Midwest Meteor Association will be glad to know of novels it may add to its professional library; it does seem as if Jules Verne must have said something, or Rider Haggard.

THE Committee on Vermont Traditions and Ideals rightly thinks I should go more into details about the Green Mountain Series of their four Vermont books than I did in the recent reply to "the very wise person who is planning to spend next summer in Vermont." These remarkable little volumes—"Vermonters: A Book of Biographies," "Vermont Prose: A Miscellany," "Vermont Songs and Ballads," and "Vermont Verse"—were prepared as a project of this Committee, of which Arthur Wallace Peach is chairman and Dorothy Canfield and Zephine Humphrey among the members. No one working with or for them was paid a penny for all the labor that went into them. "We have sold 4,000 copies to our astonishment," says my informant, "and the second edition is now ready." They cost a dollar and half apiece. Vrest Orton, director of the Stephen Daye Press, edited the "Vermont Year Book and Guide," which I am told is really an encyclopedia of Vermont, giving the names of hotels, stores, business and professional men, and so on, but having for its chief distinction the fact that for every one of the more than 240 towns in the state there is a historical and geographical introduction pointing out to tourists places of historic or scenic interest. The book was published by the Tuttle Company in 1920-1931. Another result of that reply was that St. Albans sent me a folder with pictures of the town and its surroundings; no doubt the Chamber of Commerce would send it to inquirers.

V. M. S., San Francisco, Cal., collects books "which are in form stories in pictures, with narry a word in 'em of text."

SO far, he says, he has made this collection, which he believes unique:

> "Frans Masereel's 'Bilder-Romane' (Consisting of six separate stories: Geschichte Ohne Worte, Die Idee, Die Sonne, Mein Studenbuch, Die Passion Eines Menschen, and Das Werk, Kurt Wolff, Munich).
>
> "Contrary to public opinion, Ward did not start this movement for Masereel antedated him. Further, the latter's work is far more subtle and deep. 'Nuckel's Destiny,' Farrar and Rinehart, Lynd Ward's 'God's Man' and 'Mad Man's Drum (Cape), James Reid's 'Life of Christ in Woodcuts' (Farrar), Milt Gross's travesty 'He Done Her Wrong.'"

It looks to me as if the collection were complete from the American side, unless it admits all-photograph books for very little children, on which a mild sort of imitative run was started by the success of Steichen's "First Picture Book" (Harcourt, Brace). I hear that we are to have a new translation of a German book whose immense and lasting success was due about half-and-half to pictures and to text: Busch's "Max und Moritz," on whose head has been heaped the responsibility for the Katzenjammer Kids. Christopher Morley is happily in charge of their introduction to the American public in the edition of "Max and Moritz" promised by William Morrow, so that the Busch *enfants terrible* will have a chance to live it down. I hope someone will give us an English version of an even better blend of comic-strip and verse, Busch's famous "Die Fromme Helene." Nothing beats these drawings of the unedifying career of the pious Helen, save the demure doggerel that describes them. But if someone does bring out this book, with the original Busch heroine going up to Heaven on the cover, I trust no American uncle will repeat the classic error of the German gentleman who, misled by the title, gave the volume to his little niece as a confirmation present.

J. *H. K., College of the City of New York, is making a list of modern books on economic subjects that excel from the standpoint of English expression. "It has always been my impression," he says, "that nicety of language form and content parallels the worth of a book on a business subject."* Not without reason John Maynard Keynes named his latest work on economics and world politics "Essays in Persuasion" (Harcourt, Brace). A lawyer might use it as a living example of so applying stinging truth that it seems to be balm. That, I submit, is the application of the best literary methods to the technique of truth-telling. Mr. Walter Lippman has set Sir Arthur Salter's "Recovery" (Century) on the road to glory in this country by his enthusiastic recommendation in the *Herald-Tribune;* many a reader wishes native modesty had not kept him from talking in like terms of his own book "The United States in World Affairs" (Harper). Norman Thomas writes so that any reader, once beginning, goes on to the close: his "As I See It" (Macmillan) follows the program for a new social order outlined in his recent "America's Way Out" (Macmillan) and brings this work up to the moment. Another important book on a planned social economy is "America Faces the Future," by Charles Beard (Houghton Mifflin), whose English style is compelling enough to make his books an adventure whether one agrees with them or not; young people, even, have been known to conquer their well-known aversion to history long enough to go through the two volumes of "The Rise of American Civilization."

There has been such a demand at public libraries and even in bookshops for books "calculated to help readers form intelligent opinions on our most vexing problems" that the American Library Association has prepared, with the help of thirty distinguished American social scientists, a list of books published since January, 1931, in a leaflet with the title "For Thinking America." All books on this list are not only valuable in content but with some distinction of style. Indeed, books on economics have acquired this year, by very pressure of necessity, a certain distinction of style. For lucidity confers this, and to be read at all this year, a book on any social topic must be clear. See, for example, Sir Josiah Stamp's "Financial Aftermath of the War" (Scribner), by the economic adviser to the British Government and director of the Bank of England, or the succinct statement of conditions and prospects in T. E. Gregory's "The Gold Standard and Its Future" (Dutton).

D. *L., Minneapolis, Minn., asks for novels about Chicago, "not for business reasons, but purely as a literary interest."* I'm not so sure that all novels about Chicago have been to that city's business interest, whatever literary reasons they may have fulfilled. For example, I was so impressed by the wailing of the police-patrol wagons opening Mackinlay Kantor's "El Goes South" (Coward-McCann) that I should think impressionable people, recognizing the sound as they will if they hear it from a Chicago railway terminal, might choose to remain in this shelter between trains. Nor would they be greatly cheered by his "Diversey" (Coward-McCann). W. R. Burnett, having taken the Southwest for change of scene, returns in "Silver Eagle" (Dial) to the scene of his early triumph in "Little Caesar" (Dial), Charles Walt's "Love in Chicago" (Harcourt, Brace) deals with racketeering; Felix Riesenberg's "Red Horses" (McBride) with a get-rich-quick millionaire. But "This our Exile," by David Burnham (Scribner) concerns a banker's family in the suburbs; Marion Strobel's "A Woman of Fashion" (Farrar & Rinehart) includes a dressmaking establishment among various irregular adventures; and Clifford Raymond's satiric "Our Best People" (Bobbs-Merrill) takes in all types from uplifters to underworlders. In Henry Channon's "Joan Kennedy" (Dutton) an English girl marries a Chicago man (two of the people in his new "Paradise City" [Dutton] made their money in Chicago); the intelligentsia figures in John Gunther's "The Red Pavilion" (Harper); Henry Justin Smith's "Deadlines" (Harcourt, Brace) in the guise of a series of sketches of newspaper men gives the best all-around view of the personal make-up of a large newspaper that I have found.

These are all fairly recent, most of them not long from the press. Of somewhat older books, the best cover more than one generation, like Edna Ferber's "The Girls" (Doubleday, Doran) which described the world of spinsterhood through three successive social changes; or "The Smiths," by Janet Fairbank (Bobbs-Merrill), in which a couple grow up with the city; or "Tides," by Ada and Julian Street (Doubleday, Doran), another three-generation novel. "The Good Red Bricks," by Mary Sinon (Dutton), is a fine study of everyday life and character in the 'nineties; of the Pardway novels, by Lester Cohan (Liveright), the first, "Sweepings," concerns a department store, the second, "The Great Bear," the Pit in the 'eighties. Frank Norris's "The Octopus" and "The Pit" everyone knows. Ruth Russell's "Lake Front" (Rockwell) gives in the prologue an account of Père Marquette's coming to Chicago, tells the story of the O'Mara family in the city for sixty years, and closes with a bootlegger's death. Edgar Wallace's "On the Spot" (Doubleday, Doran) is a novel made out of his famous play; that is, I suppose the play must have come first.

I trust that this department will not be blamed for the proportion of roisterers to be found among these characters; I keep track of city novels and note them as they come in, and these came in.

SEVERAL *READERS* have recommended the same book as a source for authentic information about the historic basis of Mother Goose; *Miss Alice Jordan, Supervisor of Work with Children at the Boston Public Library*, says:

> Katherine E. Thomas is the author of a book called "The Real Personages of Mother Goose" (Lothrop) which purports to give the correct historical sequence for the rhymes connected with the name of Mother Goose. A great deal of research went into the preparation of this book and it is certainly interesting, although one might not wish to accept all of its implications. It has no index unfortunately.

Miss Marjorie Quigley, Montclair Public Library, N. J., adds to the list provided for *B. B. B., California,* of which this book is to be a part, a French quotation-book that I believe libraries in general could use with good effect: "Les Citations Françaises," by Othon Guerlac (Colin, 102 Boulevard Saint-Michel, Paris). This "recueil de passages celèbres, phraess familières, mots historiques, avec l'indication exacte de la source suivi d'un index alphabetique par auteurs et par sujets" will come in handy in many ways.

I. *H. L., Miami, Fla.*, read some time ago a story in the *Forum* and lent the magazine containing it to a relative who lost it; hence all she can recall is that the tale was by André Maurois and concerned experiments of people on Mars on people on this earth, with the strange phenomena here observed in consequence of them. So I had no more than told her that the story was "The Earth Dwellers" and that it was in the issues of the *Forum* for August and September, 1928 (incidentally, the planet from which the experiments were conducted was not Mars, but Uranus) when it appeared in book form as part of one of M. Maurois's most enchanting books, "A Private Universe" (Appleton). Here, too, are those two bits of advice to young French gentlemen about to travel, the one telling a young man how to get on in this country, the other in England—and the American one will be a good piece of information for an American young man, too. Here is the incomparable "Chelsea Way" in which he shows how easy it is for him to apply the Proustian technique to an appreciation of life in present-day London. Here, also, I am happy to say, are his urbane comments on being a professor in an American college. In short, it is a treasure-box.

I was asked some time ago about two promised books: one correspondent asked me to inform him of the prospects of getting the second volume of "Varina Howell: Wife of Jefferson Davis," by Eron Rowland. It has appeared, from the press of Macmillan, and maintains the high level of the first volume; this completes the work, which the first volume brought to the Secession. The other inquiry was for a social history of smoking; this has appeared from the press of Harcourt, Brace; it is Count Corti's "A History of Smoking," and everything about things smokable, from the Mayas to the capitulation of Kansas in 1927 is here with pictures. None of the ladies in these pictures are actually smoking, though one is taking snuff and Vigée LeBrun has a lighted pipe in her hand—oh yes, there is one Chinese lady smoking a pipe too, but I took it at first for a saxophone.

O. *I. S., Birmingham, Ala.*, writes:

> Paris and France are to me like Carcassone or Wordsworth's "Yarrow Unvisited," but I have read with delight your suggestions to C. B. U. who is to have two months next summer in that land.
>
> May I offer an addition to the list of profitable books? This one is a history, but it is planned to provide a background for the France of today, a sort of supplement to the guidebooks. It covers the period from Clovis to the Renaissance and will make many places of interest more understandable by the clear account of the events connected with them. The book is "Old France," by John G. Coulter, Putnam, 1930. In a handy volume size, with good print, many illustrations, a chronological table, and a folded map, it would be an excellent companion for the traveler.

K. *H., Montclair, N. J.*, thanking this department for introducing her to "Best Poems of 1927," edited by L. A. G. Strong, says: "In reading it I found a sonnet, 'Time,' by Kenneth Slade Alling, which seemed a most concise epitome of the ideas about which C. R. S. asked when he wrote regarding the time—theories involved in 'Berkeley Square' and 'Hotel Universe.'" It is but a few pages further than the poem I quoted from A. E., and is a fine presentation of "Time's unwalled room where simultaneously the past, the present, and the future act their far events. . . ."

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Trade Winds

By P. E. G. QUERUS

BOOKS I have enjoyed lately:—

A Private Universe, by André Maurois. A book of meditations by a thoroughly civilized man. This, more than many large volumes of highly merchandized borborygmus, conveys the ideas and behaviors of a modern intelligence.

Three Go Back, by J. Leslie Mitchell. A really brilliant story of one woman and two men among the Cro-Magnon people of ancient Atlantis, 20,000 years ago. This is the only adventure yarn I ever read in which the physical embarrassments of mixed pioneering are dealt with in candor and humor. Many a chuckle and many a thrill. This is a grand book, with a real idea behind it. I won't spoil it for you by synopsis. It looks as though the age of Rider Haggard were coming back. Don't let the punk jacket put you off this gorgeous tale.

Quicker Than The Eye, by John Mulholland. A distinguished sleight-of-hand artist, well known to the Book Trade, writes some inside memoirs and humors of the magician business. When John Mulholland performed in China they called him *Chong Mo Haw Liang,* which is as near as they could pronounce his name. This delighted John, for it means "Controller of the devil's skill." Mr. Mulholland is editor of *The Sphinx,* the famous professional magazine for magicians.

The Quick and the Dead, by Claire Spencer. This one, shortly to be published, will give the critics a twist. The story of a young painter with a difficult heredity. Miss Spencer (Mrs. Harrison Smith) writes with her nerves taut: perhaps a little too much straining for modernism. The story is cruel, morbid, powerful, surgically adept, with occasional flashes of hysteria. She gives her hero heart disease but then decides to have him kill himself at Coney Island instead. She will give some of her women readers heart disease, too; she knows too much about them. There are better nudes in this book than the Merrills ever dreamed of.

I'm not at all sure that it's a good idea for the Stokes Company to include that leaflet of instructions—"How to Read the Queen Stories"—in their Ellery Queen detective books. Mr. Queen's little sermon about Deducible Conclusions and Analytico-Deductive methods is dangerously solemn. The facsimile of Ellery Queen's autograph is also fried chicken for a handwriting expert. It is too plainly a synthetic signature.

Unusually intelligent Reading Lists are those from Baltimore entitled *Goucher College Alumnæ Reading.* These suggestions, compiled in coöperation with the Enoch Pratt Free Library of Baltimore (whose magnificent new building is nearing completion) were drawn up for Goucher alumnæ who wished to know, without publishers' hooey, some books really worth their while. List I is *The World Today;* List II is *The Sciences.* List II carries this motto: "My own suspicion is that the universe is not only queerer than we suppose, but queerer than we *can* suppose.—J. B. S. Haldane."

Will Solle of Kroch's lively bookstore in Chicago (206 N. Michigan Ave.) has returned to work after eight months' vacation from books and book reviews. He has resumed his occasional letter to special customers reporting on the reading he has found exciting. He says Pitkin's *History of Human Stupidity* is "the best rejuvenator I've encountered in years. It crackles with stimulation."

In the early spring season Doubleday's remarkable list had a pronounced lead in the number of fiction Best Sellers. (Any novel that has sold 15,000 is a Best Seller this year.) In Bowker's monthly chart for March, Doubleday rated 8 out of the 25 titles listed; the nearest competitor was Harper's with 3. In the forthcoming lap we have a hunch that Bobbs-Merrill, Little, Brown, and Knopf are going to show a burst of form. Alfred Knopf returned from his European trip wearing a Homburg hat with a purple guinea-hen feather in it, which always means Business.

The Hotel Sinton in Cincinnati has the ingenious idea of putting a tablet on the door of the rooms occupied by visiting celebrities. If the management has a few hours notice in advance they sometimes even have the tablet up by the time the distinguished visitor arrives, which gives the most blasé guest a surprising thrill. As you go along the corridors of the Sinton your eyes is caught by a surprising series of names. "Believe it or Not," says the tablet on door 833, "This Room was Occupied by RIPLEY." Other names discovered in a prowl through the hotel are Queen Marie; Samuel Seabury; Rudy Vallée; O. O. McIntyre; Presidents Taft, Wilson, Harding, and Coolidge; Count Tolstoy; William Jennings Bryan; A. Conan Doyle; King Albert of Belgium; Will Rogers; Otis Skinner; Mary Roberts Rinehart; Bebe Daniels.

Marcia Passage, of the Sunwise Turn branch of the Doubleday, Doran bookshops (East 44 Street) is one of the rare and charming booksellers who have *Sirenica* as a favorite talisman. The gracious and beautiful melancholy of that magical book (now available only in a Mosher edition), appeals, about once a year or so, to some new discoverer. It is one of the Golden Florins that jingle in the pocket of the very few.—As also is our old friend John Aubrey (see *The Scandals and Credulities,* reprinted by Appleton not long ago) who has recently been a delighted windfall for Stella Benson and Alexander Woollcott.

A modest celebration in the Trade was the initiation of Messrs. Humphrey Milford and R. W. Chapman, of the Oxford Press, into membership in the very esoteric Grillparzer Club. It might happen some day that you would stumble into a small café in the publishing region of Lower Fifth Avenue where the initials G. S. V. are painted on a pillar. These mean *Grillparzer Sittenpolizei Verein.* The requirements of membership are (1) an enthusiasm for books which do not sell, (2) a passion for veal cutlet *parmigiana* with Chianti, (3) an interest in Viennese modes of living. A portrait of Franz Grillparzer hangs in a corner of the room, and the proprietor keeps a set of Grillparzer's works in the cigar-case, ready for reference.

Few of the members of the Grillparzer Club, so far as can be learned, have actually read any of the works of their eponym, but several of his plays are kept in print by the Oxford Press (American Branch). The Oxford edition of *Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen* (Grillparzer's tragedy based on the story of Hero and Leander) includes two sonnets written to Grillparzer's memory by William Ellery Leonard. Grillparzer spent most of his life (1791-1871) in Vienna; in spite of that city's reputation for gaiety he seems to have been a melancholy fellow with a strong inferiority condition. He was in love with lovely Kathi Fröhlich for fifty years without being able to make up his mind to marry her.

When Kathi died in 1879 she bequeathed to the city of Vienna her private memoranda of their friendship with the instruction that they were not to be opened until 1922. This we learn in Professor John L. Kind's edition of *Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen.*

One of the honorary members of the Grillparzer Club is Frau Vicki Baum, herself a Viennese. The chancellor of the club is Dr. Arnold Genthe.

Speaking of Oxford, those who have ever visited that town may be interested to know that Sir Arthur Salter, K.C.B., author of that fine book *Recovery,* is the son of Mr. James Salter, the well-known boat-builder at Oxford. All lovers of Oxford boating and the river Thames are familiar with the famous boat-works at Folly Bridge.

The vigorous articles in the *Publishers' Weekly* by Miss Marion E. Dodd of the excellent Hampshire Bookshop (Northampton, Mass.) have attracted attention. Miss Dodd explores various grievances of the book business and remarks: "There is on the part of the publishers an unbearably superior attitude toward their distributors the booksellers, which has in it the elements of comedy when compared with the complete coöperation and even deference that one can secure from the manufacturer of stationery."

Those modest booksellers in railway station arcades who deferred to Mr. Sumner by displaying the illustrations of *Nudism Comes to America* figged with strips of black cellophane, are now in a quandary. It appears that the heat of electric bulbs in show windows causes cellophane to buckle and gape.

The rearrangement of floor-plan and display in the Putnam Bookstore (2 West 45th Street) deserves the highest praise. I have rarely seen any shop look so clean, bright and alluring. Congratulations to Frank Magel, Sarah Ball and others of the staff. Putnam's window-displays put in this spring by Warren Wright (who grew up in J. K. Gill's famous store in Portland, Oregon) have also been much noticed. Mr. Wright says that among current books some that he particularly enjoys selling are:—*Mr. Darby,* by Martin Armstrong; *And Now Goodbye,* by James Hilton; *Two Living and One Dead,* by Sigurd Christiansen; *The Trial of Gregor Kaska,* by Fred Andreas; and *The Glories of Venus,* a novel about Mexico, by Susan Smith.

Miss Ball, by the way, tells a delightful story of her downtown bookselling

FRANZ GRILLPARZER

days when a customer complained to her bitterly that he had visited half a dozen shops asking if they had any Juvenal. In each case, until he reached Miss Ball, the bookseller offered him *Mother Goose* or *Alice in Wonderland.*

The New Books

Fiction

(*Continued from page* 735)

of New York. The author remains anonymous because, according to the jacket, "I have to live in New York after this book is published!"—a plea which irresistibly calls to mind the classic retort, "*Je n'en vois pas la nécessité.*" As a matter of fact, it must be said to the author's credit that his book is not nearly so sensational as his title and his anonymity would lead one to suspect; he merely displays the facts that the city government is corrupt, that criminals are both powerful and protected, and that before the stock market crash there were banks and corporations which were administered with illegal recklessness. But our present metropolitan society must be the despair of the muck-raker as it is the despair of the satirist; we knew all this before, and if we did not, the most conservative newspapers carry every week revelations more startling than anything in "Babylon on Hudson."

There are a crowd of characters, too numerous and too unimportant and ill-drawn to make any claim on us. They spend most of their time discussing the affairs of the city (which, they conclude, are in a bad way); but though these discussions sometimes contain good ideas, such as the genuine and too seldom made criticism of our vaunted architecture that it is created by the desire to have a large number of high-renting windows, the conversations are too desultory and inconclusive to be valuable.

The book is written in that shoddy-shiny veneer of affected sophistication overlying real ignorance which is so singularly annoying. The unskilful imitation of Mr. Mencken and Mr. Nathan, the parade of emancipated thought, and the truly remarkable spelling all are typical. All in all, "Babylon on Hudson" appears to have been put together by a hack who hoped to make some money from the burning of Rome, and who has not the skill nor the conviction to make his wares acceptable.

THE MAN WITHOUT A NAVEL. By *Cuthbert A. Palmer.* Ithaca, N. Y.: Dragon Press. $1.50.

THE MAN WITH A WEAK HEART. By *Gordon Gardiner.* Houghton Mifflin. $2.

SEVEN MURDERS. By *Robert Harold May.* Macaulay. $2.

THE MISERABLE SINNER. By *Dolf Coyllarde.* Macaulay. $2.

POET-WAR PIRATE. By *Stephen King-Hall.* Houghton Mifflin. $2.

WITHIN THE WEB. By *Joan Sutherland.* Farrar & Rinehart. $2 net.

PANAMA IS BURNING. By *Philip Lindsay.* Farrar & Rinehart. $2 net.

THE FORBIDDEN CITY. By *Idella Purnell.* Macmillan. $2.

DISTRICT NURSE. By *Faith Baldwin.* Farrar & Rinehart. $2 net.

THE GOLDEN WINDOWS. By *Andrew Soutar.* Sears. $2.

DEATH RATTLE. By *Hanns Gobsch.* Little, Brown. $2.

MODERN ATLANTIC STORIES. Edited by *Charles Swain Thomas.* Little, Brown.

International

SUN YAT SEN VERSUS COMMUNISM. By MAURICE WILLIAM. Williams & Wilkins. 1932. $5.

A volume of over two hundred pages devoted to proving that Sun Yat Sen in the second and third of his Three Principles of the People reversed the favorable judgments on communism contained in the First Principle; and that he based his second and third principles on this author's earlier work, "The Social Interpretation of History."

In so far as Sun Yat Sen himself is concerned, the evidence of his indebtedness to Dr. William is conclusive. It is premature, however, to conclude therefore that "Dr. Sun's final conclusions, formulated about six months before his death, won China away from communism and threw the weight of her four hundred million people to the side of the nations committed to the principles of democracy."

The fate of China's millions is still in the balance. The adoption by them of Dr. William's philosophy instead of that of Karl Marx would in itself be only an equivocal adoption of "democracy." For in attacking Marx, William merely shifts the theoretical battle of the workers from the producers to the merchants. "The capitalist principle is to be eliminated from every department serving the needs of the consumer."

That is Dr. William's prophecy. Another of his prophecies, made in 1919, is that "underproduction of the needs of consumers is about to abolish the 'socialism' of Russia."

Brief Mention

Everett Dean Martin, who has been extraordinarily successful in his lecture to an intelligent public, is the author of *The Conflict of the Individual and the Mass in the Modern World* (Holt. $2), a subject which has been vigorously discussed, though not always under so specific a title. * * * Readers interested in social welfare and illfare will find in James T. Farrell's *Young Lonigan* (Vanguard Press. $3.75) a photographic account in fiction form of the history of a tough boy from the parochial school on through adolescence. It is painfully realistic and frank in its descriptions and written with sufficient skill to seem much more than a case history. * * * A biography of LaSalle written in English was published last year. Now Paul Chesnel's *History of Cavalier de La Salle* has been translated from French and proves to be a brief and lucid account documented from letters which apparently have not been used before and making a most satisfactory reference book for libraries as well as a good biography to read. This Life has been recommended by the Minister of Public Instruction in France (Putnam. $3). * * * Lorne Knight, who is the hero of "Pechuck," was lucky enough to get on board a whaler bound for the north and there to be taken on by Stefansson as an assistant on one of his most important expeditions. He died of scurvy in the far north in 1922, and this book has been prepared from his notes, by Richard G. Montgomery. It is very good narrative and, while apparently issued as a juvenile, is a good travel book for any age (Dodd, Mead. $2.50). * * * The Goethe Centenary is further indicated by Barker Fairley's *Goethe As Revealed in His Poetry* (University of Chicago Press. $2.50), a book written primarily for students of Goethe.

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New Dollars for Old

TOWARDS A REFORM OF THE PAPER CURRENCY, Particularly in Point of its Design. A text and specimens furnished by W. A. Dwiggins. New York: Limited Editions Club. 1932.

TO reform any artistic or esthetic absurdity in this land of the free is a Herculean task and a thankless one. "Reform" of personal habits can be achieved pretty easily by any aggressive band of Puritan fanatics who have nothing worth while to do and a zeal for intruding themselves in other people's affairs. Legislative enactments on all manner of idiotic and meddlesome matters are as easy to bring about as weeds in the garden. But to civilize America—well, only God can do that, and He moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform. And even those who know how things might be bettered — things which are not Puritanical intermeddling, which do not "hurt business," nor entail physical suffering—are aghast at the stupidity and blindness of those who have it in their power to encourage if not to bring about better works.

Take the "Queen and Mother of all the Arts," architecture. Having learned that the Queen-Anne-front-and-Mary-Ann-rear style of "cottage" architecture is bad building and bad art, we are at once plunged into such architecturalooralness as Senator Clark's house. We learn that that is bad form and bad art: we then express our sentimentality in Sugar Gothic and whitewashed stone houses with cunning little dove cotes in the gables carefully closed up to prevent the unsanitary doves from getting in.

Or take printing. We no sooner get away from the insipidity of the mid-nineteenth century than we are in the clutches of the advertising boys—the Confraternity of Ballyhooers—and Novelty (with a terribly big sans-serif N) becomes the shibboleth, and "we don't know where we're going, but we're on our way" becomes the theme song of the newest ritual. And if you examine contemporary printing carefully, you will find that we haven't even yet caught up with many of the sound practices of the pre-machine days in typography.

But the artistic sickness of America is deeper even than this. For we, even more than the English, are a "business people." We have no artistic *flair*, such as makes a state occasion in France a ceremony. And we take refuge in our ignorance of how to do things in a sentimentality which makes us devotees of Colonial furniture, and try to disguise our fear of decorum by being sloppy in our conduct. For it is only fear and ignorance which gives the etching *qua* etching its ridiculous vogue, and eliminates every straw hat on September 15th.

This same fear and ignorance dominates the lesser arts. We cannot do things with imagination, appropriateness, and decorum. White tiled bathrooms and pink sheets . . . but perhaps I had better come down to more appropriate cases. Take our paper money. I once had my say, in this *Review*, when the smaller bills came into use, on the irritatingly bad designs of the currency—only to be greeted with the usual American defense-retort-flippant that any kind of money is good enough if one can only get hold of it. But that is to beg the question.

The fact of the matter is that the art and practice of graphic design, as carried out by the two great institutions at Washington—the Bureau of Engraving and Printing and the Government Printing Office—are, speaking soberly, childish, trivial, and banal. A recent critic of these institutions contends that the only good State printing is done by some Australian printers in Papua! Certainly that at Washington has become debased and emasculated to a degree which calls for emphatic protest. Such protest is beginning to be heard. I recently wrote something about the poor quality of Government printing which elicited an attempted rebuttal in the report of the Public Printer covering six pages: and the gist of the answer was a series of letters from second-rate government officials praising the Government Printing Office. No attempt was made to secure competent *typographic* opinion favorable to the Government Printing Office, for obvious reasons.

Now comes a book devoted to the offenses of the sister institution at Washington, the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, where, under the direction of quite incompetent designers, is produced our paper currency and postage and revenue stamps. To anyone interested in the arts of design it is apparent that those arts outside of the Bureau have attained a possible excellence so far beyond what the Government is content with that merely one look at a dollar bill is convincing evidence. Yet nothing is done about it—nobody seems able to suggest what is to be done, nor is listened to if he does. Possibly it is because criticism has usually been dictated by those afraid of the ancient bogey of "the Government in business," or by merely destructive critics. It *is* easier to say that a thing is bad than to say how it can be bettered. And it is just because Mr. Dwiggins is proposing something really better that his book may conceivably have some eventual influence on the design of government paper in this country.

Mr. Dwiggins has sought to analyze the reasons why our paper currency is so badly designed, by a piece of destructive criticism which is as clever as it is devastating. (If you think that I speak harshly and shatteringly in my own remarks, I ask that you read Mr. Dwiggins's more good tempered words: the net criticism is the same.) Obviously anything so bad as the United States Government's practice of graphic design can only be handled without gloves. And that it not only needs reformation but how it can be reformed is the author's thesis.

How to reform the design of the currency and of other printed paper issued by the moribund Bureau of Engraving and Printing constitutes the second part of this small but aggressive book. The actual offenses against taste and good design, as exemplified by the five dollar bill are skilfully set forth. One cannot quote details of this criticism, because the face and back of the bill are both so bad that no one thing is worse than any other. Yet there are many quotable phrases, as, for instance, that since we are a grown-up nation, it is time—artistically—"for us to wash behind our ears . . . and begin to take a little pride in our get-up." Mr. Dwiggins's reasons why the five dollar bill is bad design constitute as clever a piece of analytic art criticism as could be written —and it is the outburst of a man weary of the stupidity and slovenliness and ignorance of designers of articles of everyday use by all of us.

But Mr. Dwiggins does not stop there. He produces for us several of the paper issues of a mythical country called "Antipodes." There is a five crown note reproduced in assumed facsimile and tipped in, and there are postage stamps, revenue stamps, postmarks, etc., reproduced in colors, and exemplifying by their suitability of design what might be done with similar issues of the United States. That such a reform in the design of stamps and paper money is not merely the visionary whim of an exasperated mystic is evident from the fact that in size, shape, and cost of manufacture these suggested designs involve no departure whatever from our established standards: while there are countries in the world which (leaving out the "Antipodes") have done almost the same things in similar superior ways. Mr. Dwiggins does well to assail the inertia and somnolence of the powers that be in Washington (he believes that they fell asleep about 1845) because we could, if we would, have designs in harmony with our artistic best, and with the real wealth and importance of our nation.

This essay has been printed by the Walpole Printing Office, and issued in a subscription edition of 452 copies by the Limited Editions Club. Only enough copies were printed to fill advance orders, hence no copies are now for sale—and it seems unlikely that many owners will part with one of the most interesting and virile books which has come along. And as a constructive attempt to bring "art up to date" it is better than the New School for Social Research and sans-serif type rolled up together!

R.

George Gissing

BROWNIE. By GEORGE GISSING. New York: Columbia University Press. 1932. $5.

WHEN George Gissing came to America in 1877 he reached Chicago "without friends and with less than five dollars in his pocket." He earned a precarious living for the term of his residence in Chicago by writing stories for the *Chicago Tribune's* Saturday supplement and other Chicago newspapers. Four of these "buried stories" were printed by Covici in 1924, edited by Christopher Hagerup. Now seven more stories, discovered in the files of Chicago newspapers of the late 'seventies by George Everett Hastings and Thomas Ollive Mabbott, with introductions by them and by Vincent Starrett, have been issued in simple but satisfactory format by the Columbia University Press. The printing has been done by the Stephen Daye Press at Brattleboro. Students of nineteenth century English literature and of George Gissing in especial will be interested in the book, though it would seem more interesting as a bit of literary detective work than as literature.

Book Collector's Packet

A Monthly Review of Fine Books, Bibliography, Typography. Edited by PAUL JOHNSTON. Meriden, Conn.

THIS is the first number of a new monthly devoted to books and book printing. It is in form an eight-page newspaper, three columns to the page. The type is large and well handled, and the printing is good.

The contents include a consideration of the term "edition" in book printing, notes on the Fifty Books and on sporting books, a causerie on book hunting in Manhattan, an article on book illustrations, and numerous short reviews. This first number is interesting and we shall await the future issues with expectancy. R.

The tenth annual convention of the College Bookstore Association will be held in New York at the Hotel Pennsylvania May 16, 17, 18, and 19.

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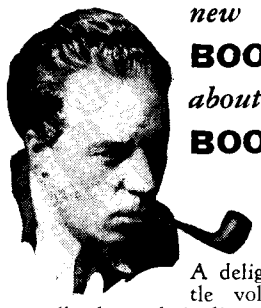

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THE SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE
25 West 45th Street
New York City

The PHŒNIX NEST

OPENING at random the Viking Press's American edition of "The Journal of *Arnold Bennett*"—also the Book League of America's selection for June and not to be published until the 27th of this month—we immediately struck an entry:

> I have now decided, acting on *Phillpotts's* advice, to write a short story *every* month. I finished my November story this morning: *The Phantom Sneeze*, a humorous ghost tale, 4,500 words.

Not a bad idea! Or one might be able to write two short stories a month in one's spare time. Let's see, twenty-four short stories a year! Sell 'em for five hundred dollars apiece—we wouldn't get Bennett's prices—and net a tidy income of—hasty calculation on ten fingers and thumbs—of twelve thousand a year! But there's that darned alarm clock again! . . .

"The Journal" is a big fat book. It is a great mixture. Some of it is dull, some quite interesting. In 1908 Bennett could write singularly enough of his attitude toward women:

> I see that at bottom I have an intellectual scorn, or the scorn of an intellectual man, for all sexual-physical manifestations. They seem childish to me, unnecessary symptoms and symbols of a spiritual phenomenon. (Yet few Englishmen could be more perversely curious and adventurous than I am in just those manifestations.) I can feel myself despising them at the very moment of deriving satisfaction from them, as if I were playing at being a child. And even as regards spiritual affection, I do not like to think that I am dependent spiritually, to even a slight degree, on any one. I do not like to think that I am not absolutely complete and sufficient in myself to myself. I could not ask for a caress, except as a matter of form, and to save the *amour-propre* of her who I knew was anxious to confer it.

Just before that, Bennett has admitted that he "always unthinkingly assumed that women . . . always understood each other and held together perfectly," and admits that he was in error. For a man who did so much with the whole *comédie humaine*, he appears in these statements curiously limited in his attitude toward life, curiously purblind. . . .

Christopher Morley recently remarked to the conductor of "Round about Parnassus," in this periodical, anent the latter's discussion of a certain nineteenth century English poet,

> I also (though I know him only in the scraps in anthols) am another Beddoes man. Let's be Twin Beddoes.

And we overheard *Leonard Bacon* in argument with the same person exclaim, "Nay,—in your Balearic teeth!" . . .

Alfred A. Knopf has now announced an American ediion, fully authorized—not the emasculated version which was pirated over here some time ago—of *D. H. Lawrence's* "Lady Chatterley's Lover." It will be published in June at two dollars and a half, trade edition. . . .

The New English Weekly is a review of Public Affairs, Literature and Art, is edited by *A. R. Orage*, and the first issue in England appeared on April 21st, priced sixpence. It is published at 38 Cursitor Street, London, E.C.4. Mr. Orage, as you probably know, was for fifteen years editor of *The New Age*, and some forty well-known writers of today had their start on his paper, among whom were *J. C. Squire, St. John Ervine*, the late *Katherine Mansfield, Michael Arlen, Richard Aldington, Rebecca West*, and *Storm Jameson*. An American editor of the new venture has been appointed in the person of *Gorham B. Munson*. . . .

For the most sophomoric bosh we have read this week we nominate the beginning of "Readers and Writers" by *R. H. C.* in the first issue of *The New English Weekly*. We reproduce it here with our own comments in italics:

> As I was saying ten years ago [*And who are you? Are you or your opinions of any conceivable importance?*] when my literary studies were suddenly lifted to another plane [*Divine levitation*], Mr. Ezra Pound is one of our very few major men of letters. [*Well, he would agree with you heartily.*] In literary criticism he invariably selects and "goes for" (I'm afraid that is the right word) [*Oh mercy, Miss Nancy!*] major topics [*Oh, the "going for" major topics and how much it is!*] and as invariably he arrives at conclusions which are none the less major, even when, as frequently, they are wrong. [*It is an insane age, of course, but the printing of such major bosh as this is, even in these degenerate days, almost incredible. In the first place, what is a "major conclusion" in the sense of this truly elegant writer? If the conclusion drawn is wrong enough it may be major in the sense in which we say "the man perpetrated a terrific howler," but in no other sense. The writer has proved merely, so far, that he likes Pound's writing because he likes Pound's writing and nothing more. We like neither Pound nor his writing to any great extent, but we don't presume to call that a truly critical estimate either of the man or his work.*] On the creative side, so-called [*Why "so called"—what would you call it? Or do you mean that Pound is not creative?*] he has achieved excellence in four fields, all, significantly, in free translation. [*Translation, of course, cannot be said to be truly creative—so why drag in the word "creative" in the first place?*] His "sinoems" from the Chinese of Fenellosa have never been equalled by his innumerable imitators. [*How do you know that, if they are innumerable? How could you have read all of them? Do you speak English?*] His "Homage to Propertius" is as good as Propertius himself and quite as original [*A cross-examination on the subject of Propertius would certainly be interesting. One doesn't accept an* ex cathedra *statement like that. It is immediately under suspicion.*]; his "Sea-Farer" is the only Anglo-Saxon poem perfect in English; [*this sounds like one of Pound's own extravagant statements. How could the sophomore ever possibly prove what he is saying?*] and a few of his adaptations from the Provençal are better than their originals. [*If they are better—which is enormously doubtful—they are not the same as the original, so that nothing whatever is proved by that statement.*] Why, then, has he been neglected even beyond the ordinary fate of the specially gifted? [*But, of course, he hasn't. His name and work are known to anybody at all interested in literature. The myth of his neglect is simple, not to say childish, nonsense.*]

Well, enough, enough! If this is the kind of thing the astute Mr. Orage is going to expose to the air in his new periodical he is joining the Great Contemporary Brotherhood of Artistic Fakers. . . .

We have always admired the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer lion who growls so ferociously at the beginning and end of every Metro picture. Now we have learned from *C. Emerson Brown's* "My Animal Friends" (Doubleday, Doran) that for more than a year "Leo" was a star boarder at the Philadelphia Zoölogical Gardens, of which Mr. Brown is a director. The lion has been greatly missed since he departed on a personal appearance tour of movie theatres throughout the country. . . .

We have no especial comment to make upon the Pulitzer prize-winners. The award to "Of Thee I Sing" seems to have been most popular. The poetry award to *George Dillon* has awakened certain doubts in our breast, but then we are not "up on" just what books of poetry were published within the specified period. Still it seems to us that so dominating a poet as *Robinson Jeffers*, with the mass of work he has now accomplished, is the logical next candidate for a Pulitzer award. We admire Dillon's work, but among the younger men we should not rank him as high, say, as *George O'Neil*. In our opinion he has still quite a distance to go to prove himself definitely in the front rank. Nevertheless with this encouragement and his opportunity for intensive work under a Guggenheim fellowship, he should progress rapidly. *Archibald MacLeish* is another poet who is at present much superior to Dillon. His "Conquistador" is *the* event in American poetry so far this year. Much as we admire *Governor Cross* of Connecticut, and as eminent as we realize *Bliss Perry* to be, we cannot help thinking the personnel of the poetry committee unsatisfactory. *Brian Hooker* is the only poet upon it, and we doubt his particular familiarity with modern verse. In his excessively busy life Governor Cross certainly has no opportunities for thorough conversance with the same. Professor Bliss Perry is of another epoch. The appointment of so seasoned a critic and anthologist as *Louis Untermeyer* to the committee would give us a little more faith in its judgments.

THE PHŒNICIAN.

The AMEN CORNER

Your usual Oxonian is sick. That is to say he has grippe and tonsilitis and the balance of him is in dentist's hands. Lo another and he too, a *real* Oxonian.

Thank you Miss (Mrs.?) H. Your letter has made us feel much better and we are going to reprint it without your permission! Here it is—"I am a constant reader of the S. R. of Literature. In looking over the number that reached me today I rejoiced to see the return of the Amen Corner which I have missed. This was one column I never failed to read and it seemed to me as good an example of book advertising as I know. At least it gave me the desire to read most of the books mentioned though lack of time and of ready cash prevented my doing so."

. . . . .

Poor Miss (or Mrs.) H. You almost qualify to be "one after our own heart." Won't you write and tell us that you have the cash (80c) to buy a "World's Classics"[1] and the time to read when you are not (a) teaching, (b) doing housework, (c) driving an automobile or ditto washing machine. (Please strike out what is not applicable.) *World's Classics* are the best edited, best made and the most handy of all reprints and we don't care who knows it! We often thought of advertising them on the subways as "perfect for Commuters." They fit the handbag or pocket. They stand up to hard wear and are fit to grace any library after a thousand miles of travel. Ah me! What a dream. For that assumes distribution to news stands and a desire to read something besides newspapers, magazines and shockers.

. . . . .

"Why are people not buying books?" we said to a man who was in our office yesterday. "I will tell you why," he said. And this was his story, slightly expurgated so that no one need be offended! "Yesterday I bought a book to read on the trip from Pittsburgh to New York. It cost $2.50 and it was an excellent story. By the time I had finished the book my hands were red from the cloth cover and the book was falling to pieces; and I treat books gently. The cover was stamped with a cheap ink that came off. The book was ugly and shoddy. I want that story for my library and I am going to get it from the country of its origin. I wouldn't put the book I bought out on any shelf of mine." We hung our heads but comforted him with the thought that it would soon be in a dollar reprint edition where it would probably be a more creditable piece of book production. Perhaps some of us publishers are wrong in thinking the public won't notice these economies. Those who have a feeling for books and who are the real backbone of our book buyers shudder a little when they see the rather gaudy, shoddy stuff that screams from the Drug Store windows labeled "Publishers Overstock."—"Doomed to that from birth," we sigh. Anyhow The Oxonian's wares are still up to pre-slump quality. In fact we think we are improving all the time and let him who doubts come and look for himself at all we have to show in our library at 114 Fifth Avenue.

. . . . .

By the way, how happy would all of us engaged in the book business be if the Sherman law could be suspended and a "net book agreement" consummated! In happy England a bookseller who cuts prices is blacklisted by the publishers and he can obtain no books from them till he has repented and paid a fine. So the industry is fairly prosperous *and the public still buys books!* Here the publisher wants it and the bookseller wants it but they can't get it. Clearly prohibition has made law abiding citizens of us all.

. . . . .

Here are some of our latest. Mona Wilson's *Sir Philip Sidney*.[2] It is excellent, readable a little highbrow and illustrated. She wrote the definitive life of William Blake. Dr. John Haynes Holmes's *The Heart of Scott's Poetry*[3] gives us the cream of Scott. He has written a long and admirable Introduction reappraising Scott's position as a poet. We commend this as a beautiful piece of bookmaking. Augustus Zanzig's *Music in American Life*[4] continues to be one of our best sellers and so does Eric Underwood's *Short History of French Painting*.[5] After the splendid review the *New York Times* gave Paul Lewinson's *Race, Class and Party*,[6] which tells you all about negro voting in the South, sales are looking up.

THE OXONIAN.

(1) Send for complete list. (2) $3.75. (3) $2.50. (4) $3.50. (5) $3.50. (6) $3.50.

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